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QUEENSLAND ROAR

0 - 1

NEWCASTLE JETS

JETS TAKE OFF AFTER DELAYS

Roar KO'D As Griffiths Lands Late Punch

Queensland fans left Suncorp Stadium disappointed on Friday night after seeing their side dominate for much of the game, only to go down to a late goal from Joel Griffiths.

The defeat stretched Newcastle's undefeated run in Queensland to five matches and gave them their first three points of the season in what has been a slow start to the side's A-League title defence.

The match began with talk from the Queensland camp centring on their desire to gain revenge for their exit at the hands of Newcastle in last season's preliminary final. This was not the only talking point as midfielder Charlie Miller would become the first player to score in five consecutive A-League matches if he was able to add to his tally during proceedings.

The first chance of the game though fell to Queensland's Matthew McKay on 16 minutes who pounced on a soft back-pass from defender Daniel Piorkowski. McKay recovered the ball inside the area before attempting to place it underneath the advancing Covic but the 'keeper made a good save with his legs.

Covic thwarted Queensland once again only five minutes later after saving superbly from a close range header from Sergio Van Dijk. Massimo Murdocca had sent in a darting cross from the right flank to the Dutchman only for him to see his bottom right corner effort denied by a reaction save from the Jets 'keeper who seemingly reached behind his own body to get to the ball.

Newcastle were struggling to create anything going forward with Tarek Elrich putting well wide of Liam Reddy's left-hand post in what was their best chance of the first half hour.

Van Dijk again found himself in a good position in the 34th minute after good work from Matthew McKay on the right flank. McKay's cross found Van Dijk unmarked at the back-post but the striker blasted his shot over the bar from a tight angle.

The run of play continued on commencement of the second half with Charlie Miller sending a diving header straight into the arms of Ante Covic after another cross from McKay.

The 53rd minute saw Jets youngster James Holland dispossess full-back Andrew Packer on the edge of the area before squaring the ball to Song, unmarked at the back-post before putting his shot too close to Reddy who palmed the ball away.

The introduction of Tahj Minniecon and Michael Zullo in the 67th minute served to immediately liven up a match that was becoming short on genuine excitement. Zullo forced Covic into action after recovering a loose ball on the edge of Newcastle's area but didn't generate enough power to truly test the keeper.

Minniecon made two driving runs in quick succession into the Newcastle area before going to ground, but speculative appeals for penalties were waved away on both occasions by match referee Craig Zetter.

Charlie Miller saw another chance pass in the 79th minute after meeting an angled pass from Massimo Murdocca in the penalty area. The Scotsman attempted a first-time shot, but didn't generate enough power to trouble the excellent Covic who saved comfortably.

Sergio van Dyke uses his power in the air to worry the Jets defence, als for the home side the champs showed their resiliance and took the points with a late goal frm Joel Griffiths

Queensland's lack of cutting edge left the stage set for Newcastle's Joel Griffiths who capitalised on 'keeper Liam Reddy's failed attempt to punch clear a Song corner in the 83rd minute. The Newcastle striker poked the ball into the bottom right-hand corner to take his personal tally against the Queensland side to six in eight games and give the Jets a fortunate victory.

Newcastle coach Gary Van Egmond responded to suggestions the result was undeserved "A draw was more the right result. It was a real arm-wrestle," he said. "But confidence and belief is starting to build within the team and at the moment if we have to grind out a win we will"

Both coaches took something out of the game with Queensland's Frank Farina disappointed with the result but taking encouragement from other areas.

"If we were playing poorly I'd be upset. Things will turn, I'm pleased with the effort, creativity and work rate we've shown tonight," he said.

By Jarrod Ellis in Brisbane

Photos by Lee McCormick

PLAYER RATINGS - ROAR

1. Liam Reddy – 6 – Rarely tested before his late mistake
2. Andrew Packer – 5 – Quiet throughout the match
3. Luke DeVere – 6 – A solid performance at the back
4. Craig Moore – 7 – An assured display, dealt with Griffiths well
8. Massimo Murdocca - 6 – A lively performance in midfield
9. Sergio Van Dijk – 6 – Had chances but was absent for large portions of the match
10. Charlie Miller – 8 – Was the source of much of Queensland's attacking verve
11. Reinaldo – 5 – Started well but faded as the match progressed
15. Matt McKay – 7 – Produced some good work down the right
16. Hyuk-Su Seo – 7 – Rarely went forward but shut down Song well
12. Tahj Minniecon 67' – 6 – Provided a threat with his forward runs
7. Michael Zullo 67' – 6 – Constantly looking for something wide left
6. David Dodd 88' – 5 - Didn't influence the match during his time on the field

PLAYER RATINGS - JETS

1. Ante Covic – 8 – Best player on the pitch for Newcastle
25. David Pirkowski – 6 – Recovered well from his early mistake
3. Jade North – 6 – Dealt well with Queensland's strikers
2. Adam Griffiths – 6 – Was comfortable on the ball
5. James Holland – 6 – Played well in the centre of the park
8. Matt Thompson – 5 – Struggled to assert influence
10. Jin-Hyung Song – 6 – Active down the left hand side but with little result
11. Tarek Elrich – 6 – Made himself available on the right
13. Adam D'Apuzzo – 6 – A solid defensive performance
15. Jason Hoffman – 5 – Anonymous for portions of the match
9. Joel Griffiths – 6 – Quiet aside from his goal
7. Kaz Patafta 64' – 5 – Failed to create much from midfield
23. Edmundo Zura 69' – 6 – Troubled the QLD defence as the match pro-

goal! Weekly

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GOLDEN GRAHAM!

Stop The Press! Humble Hockless Rocks...

The Warriors' table is ecstatic after the final round of votes are announced and Graham Hockless becomes the first Berger since the legendary Paddy Bannon in 1974 to take out the prestigious award

HEIDELBERG United star Graham Hockless was rewarded for a superb season when he was crowned the 2008 Foxtel Cup Gold Medalist at The Peninsula Room in Docklands last Tuesday night.

Hockless won a tight count on 32 votes from Green Gully prime-mover Jeffrey Fleming amd Preston Lions midfielder Tony Sterjovski, who both finished equal second on 30.

It was just reward for an outstanding year from Hockless, who was one of the hot favourites heading into the night.

Hockless thanked his original club, Richmond Eagles during his acceptance speech, and also paid tribute to his new family at the Warriors.

He was a popular winner in what was a spectacular night at Docklands.

Not surprisingly, Altona's Henry Fa'Arodo was also a prominent vote-getter, finishing in third place just three points behind the winner, while Craig Elvin from the Melbourne Knights was also in the hunt with 28 votes.

For Fa'Arodo and Elvin, their biggest reward awaits them this weekend when they meet in the Foxtel Cup grand final at Bob Jane Stadium on Sunday.

Both will be keys to their sides hopes of being crowned the 2008 champion in what promises to be a cracking finale to the season.

FOXTEL CUP - GOLD MEDAL LEADERBOARD

Graham Hockless (Heidelberg Utd)	32
Jeffrey Fleming (Green Gully)	30
Tony Sterjovski (Preston Lions)	30
Henry Fa'arodo (Altona Magic)	29
Craig Elvin (Melbourne Knights)	28
Ross Antoniadis (W'sea Zebras)	26
Carl Recchia (Altona Magic)	19
Steve Iosifidis (Melbourne Knights)	17
Ramazan Tavsancioglu (South Melb)	17
Trent Waterson (Oakleigh Cannons)	16
Kofi Danning (A.I.S.)	15
Jesse Krncevic (Richmond)	15

In the WPL it was Box Hill Inters night with Daniela Digiammarco and Anthea Vardakas finishing joint winners of the gold medal.

The team-mates tied on 20 votes and more glory awaits them both this weekend when they too will compete in the grand final against Heidelberg United.

Ashburton's Cindy Dussoye was runner-up on 18 votes, while Belinda Panella's fantastic season was also noted, finishing third on 17 (although ineligible).

Eltham North captain Katrina Smith was also polled strongly with 17.

WPL - GOLD MEDAL LEADERBOARD

Daniela Digiammarco (Box Hill)	20
Anthea Vardakas (Box Hill)	20
Cindy Dussoye (Ashburton)	18
Belinda Pannella (Heidelberg Utd)	17
Katrina Smith (Eltham North)	17
Enza Barilla (Eltham North)	16
Deanna Niceski (Eltham North)	16
Maika Ruyter-Hooley (Bend Vipers)	16
Seyma Erenli (Ashburton)	15
Melanie Camilleri (Heidelberg Utd)	14
Laura Spiranovic (South Melb)	14

Other award winners on the night as follows:

Hoar-Melvin Award
(Best Junior Female presented by MILO)
Brianna Davey (Under 15 Girls state squad)

Jones-Martin Award
(Best Youth Female presented by the Victorian Multicultural Commission)
Kelly Eaton (Under 17 girls state squad)

Bill Fleming Award (Media Player of the Year *presented by TVH***)**
Pablo Cardozo (Richmond)

Referee Development Award
presented by Covo
George Lakrindis

Referee of the Year
presented by Covo
Hakan Anaz

Foxtel Cup Under 21 Player of the Year
presented by the Victorian Multicultural Commission
Kofi Danning (AIS)

WPL Goalkeeper of the Year
presented by Foxtel
Nabila Saliba (Preston Lions)

Foxtel Cup Goalkeeper of the Year
presented by Foxtel
Steven Tilovski (Green Gully)

WPL Top Goal Scorer *presented by NIKE*
Deanna Niceski (Eltham North)

Foxtel Cup Top Goal Scorer
presented by NIKE
Pablo Cardozo (Richmond)

WPL Coach of the Year
presented by Covo
Andy Fry (Preston Lions)

Foxtel Cup Coach of the Year
presented by Covo
Chris Taylor (Melbourne Knights)

WPL Gold Medal
Daniela Digiammarco (Box Hill) & Anthea Vardakas (Box Hill)

Foxtel Cup Gold Medal
Graham Hockless – (Heidelberg United)

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FOXTEL CUP FINAL STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PT
1 Green Gully Cavaliers	26	15	8	3	41	17	+24	**53**
2 Melbourne Knights	26	14	10	2	47	25	+22	**52**
3 Altona Magic	26	13	8	5	44	29	+15	**47**
4 Heidelberg Utd	26	11	9	6	41	30	+11	**42**
5 Richmond	26	11	7	8	57	35	+22	**40**
6 Preston Lions	26	12	3	11	37	46	-9	**39**
7 Oakleigh Cannons	26	10	7	9	28	24	+4	**37**
8 A.I.S	26	10	6	10	41	35	+6	**36**
9 South Melbourne	26	10	4	12	35	32	+3	**34**
10 Coburg Utd	26	9	4	13	29	40	-11	**31**
11 Whittlesea Zebras (R)	26	7	9	10	31	33	-2	**30**
12 Western Suburbs (R)	26	5	7	14	23	42	-19	**22**
13 Fawkner Blues (R)	26	6	3	17	22	59	-37	**21**
14 Frankston Pines (R)	26	4	5	17	19	48	-29	**17**

White Eagles Fate in AIS Hands

Springvale White Eagles officials and fans will be holding their collective breath for the outcome of talks later this month between the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) team and the Football Federation of Australia (FFA).

As far as the Eagles are concerned, the main question to be resolved is whether or not the Canberra based AIS team continue to play in the Victorian Premier League next season. This decision will determine whether the second division bound Eagles will receive a last minute reprieve and escape the relegation trapdoor.

The CEO of Football Federation of Victoria (FFV), Mark Rendell said, " The AIS and FFA are scheduled to meet on the 25th September to work out their plans for the next two seasons."

" I understand their preference (the AIS's) would be to play in the Sydney competition", said Rendell. He added " We're pushing them for a decision as soon as possible, so clubs such as Springvale can know which division they'll be playing next season. We should have an outcome soon after the coming meeting."

If the situation remains as it is, and the AIS accept the FFV's offer to play in the VPL, then the bottom four teams from the Premier League and Division One will be relegated Eagles senior coach, Stan Webster said, " Officially we're relegated but who knows what could happen with the VPL and the AIS. In finishing fourth bottom, we could maybe get saved."

If the Eagles manage to escape relegation, coach Webster's record of never having coached a relegated team will remain intact. According to Webster, the main reason the club struggled this season was the 11th hour loss of four senior players to Noble Park United and Kingston just before the opening round. " That left a big hole to fill in two weeks before the season started and the transfer deadline looming."

Misfortune continued to dog Webster's squad with a couple of late signings. Defender Simon Webster broke his leg on debut and Scottish import, midfielder Chris Reid, left to join Premier League club Heidelberg United after just a handful of games with the Eagles.

" That really was a big blow" according to Webster.

When Webster was asked if he was tempted at any stage to throw up his arms and walk away, he replied " It did get frustrating at times, but I would never have done that. Some weekends we fronted up, we didn't know if we were going to have an Under 21 team. Eight or nine players would turn up. I think that says more about the situation the club was in." Webster felt the Under 21 team wasn't getting the support from the U 16 and U 18 super-league teams.

" I think, to have a strong club, everybody's got to pull together" said the coach.

At the time of writing, Webster said no decision had been made with regard to his coaching future at the club. " We're going to the end-of-season Serbian football tournament in Perth, first weekend of October and we'll see what happens when we come back."

BY GEORGE STOGIANNOU

FOXTEL FINALS FIXTURES

Week 1
QUALIFYING FINAL
Green Gully 1
Melbourne Knights 1
Knights win 5-6 on pens
(Winner of Qualifying Final advances to Major Semi-Final. Loser proceeds to Minor Semi-Final)

1st ELIMINATION FINAL
Altona Magic 2
Preston Lions 1
(Losers of Elimination Finals are eliminated. Winners proceed to Semi- Finals)

2nd ELIMINATION FINAL
Heidelberg United 2
Richmond Eagles 1
(Losers of Elimination Finals are eliminated. Winners proceed to Semi- Finals)

Week 2
MAJOR SEMI-FINAL
Melbourne Knights 1
Altona Magic 1
Magic win 4-3 on pens
(Winner of Major Semi-Final advances to Grand Final, loser proceeds to Preliminary Final)

MINOR SEMI-FINAL
Green Gully 0
Heidelberg United 2
(Winner of Minor Semi-Final advances to Preliminary Final, loser is eliminated.)

Week 3
Preliminary Final
Heidelberg United 1
Melbourne Knights 2
(Winner of Preliminary Final advances to Grand Final, loser is eliminated)

Week 4
GRAND FINAL
Altona Magic 1
Melbourne Knights 0

CHAMPIONS
Altona Magic FC

ALTONA MAGIC

1 - 0

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

RECCHIA WRECKS KNIGHTS

Taylor Made Knights Come Apart at the Seams

After an appeal which reached the Supreme Court, the Melbourne Knights went into the Foxtel Cup Grand Final against Altona Magic without veteran striker Joe Spiteri. The game commenced in glorious sunshine, though windy conditions kept the temperature down and would make difficult for players to come to grips with the ball in the early stages. The wind blew to the Lake End of Bob Jane Stadium, which the Knights kicked-off the game attacking.

Two minutes into proceedings Mathew Grbesa cleared the ball into touch after Henry Fa'Arodo had skipped past a challenge on the right. Grbesa was called in to stop Fa'Arodo again just two minutes later, blocking his shot for the first corner of the game after a flick on by Michael Curcija put the Solomon Island international in on goal. The first corner led to a second, which Doug Mladenovic flicked on at the near post only for Savas Ozdemir to punch the ball away from the penalty area.

Curcija was caught offside when Todd McSorley switched the ball from the right to him on the left flank. Andrew Barisic was then caught offside when running onto a header from Zoran Petrevski. Neither side was commanding the early stages, with action occuring at both ends of the ground.

The first booking of the game came after ten minutes. Steve Iosifidis lost possession crossing the halfway line, and then handled the ball when trying to make the intercept to win it back. Jamie Cummings supplied a free-kick which saw the ball knocked down in the box for Petrevski, who volleyed an effort straight at Bojo Jevdjevic. A superb ball in the fourteenth minute from James Timmons sent Barisic away on the left of the penalty area, Con Anthopoulos blocking his shot as the Knights picked up their first corner.

Stefan Piorkowski pushed foward and laid a ball to Cameron Watson at the top of the box after pouncing on a flick-on and carrying the ball down the left wing. Watson fired a shot well over the bar, as the Knight began to hold sway in terms of possession and chances created.

Another combination between Piorkowski and Watson saw Piorkowski again make ground down the left but meet a defender before he could send in a cross.

Fa'Arodo was brought down for a free-kick in the nineteenth minute as Altona broke down the right. Two minutes later he continued his lively start to the game, making a good run before over-hitting a cross to the far post though Phillip Riccobene kept the ball in and the Magic enjoyed some decent possession around the penalty area.

Petrevski was caught offside after an Altona clearance richocheted of a Knights player and fell in front of him as he was tracking back. In the twenty-fifth minute a cross from Cumming was headed back across goal at the far post by Petrevski and Barisic went down in an aeriel challenge as he tried heading on goal. Referee Jim Zafirou faced his first contentious moment of the match, waving play on as the Knights appealed for a penalty.

Four minutes later it was the Knights countinuing to apply pressure, Watson striking the wall with a free-kick and Craig Elvin's shot from the rebound forcing a save from Jevdjevic.

Straight after that Carl Recchia sent in a great cross for Altona from the right. Keeper Ozdemir collided with Esala Masi coming out for the ball and in the aftermath the ball bounced free in the box before Curcija blasted a volley over the crossbar with the goal at his mercy.

Anthopoulos went into referee Zafirou's book shortly after following a tackle from behind. Watson's free kick from forty yards bounced through the crowded penalty area and went wide of the post. A crunching tackle by Mladenovic on Barisic near the halfway line gave the Knights another free-kick, Watson's ball into the area being headed away to safety.

With five minutes left in the first half Watson switched the ball to Barisic on the left inside the penalty area. Barisic slipped when bringing the ball down, but recovered to turn inside and shoot but Jevdjevic was up to the task and maintained his clean-sheet. Fa'Arodo brought the ball from the left to the right, finding McSorely just inside the penalty area. McSorely carried the ball across before shooting wide. It appeared the sides would enter the break scoreless, and after Barisic cut in from the left at the top of the box and shot at Jevdjevic that became a reality.

Altona began the second half winning a couple of early corners, before Curcija blazed a shot over on the turn. A foul on Barisic saw the Knights get a free-kick seven yards from the left hand corner of the box. Watson's dead ball to the far post saw Petrevski's header saved by Jevdjevic but the referee had already blown his whistle for an Altona free-kick.

Barisic won a corner for the Knights in the fifty-second minute. Jevdjevic punched the ball away to Piorkowski who volleyed a strike over the crossbar from twenty-two yards. Some nice passing from Alex Kiratzoglu saw him move the ball forward before being fouled and earn a free-kick ten yards outside the penalty area. Watson's inswinging free-kick was headed wide by Petrevski.

Tensions flared on the hour mark when Riccobene lunged in on Iosifidis. Players converged to remonstrate, with Riccobene eventually being booked for the foul and Petrevski getting a yellow for his part in the scuffle. Kiratzoglu then played a ball to Timmons, who found Petrevski up the middle, the Knights striker going down when getting in a shot which was cleared.

Iosifidis was caught out after pushing on when a promising attack broke down, allowing the space for McSorely to counter. McSorely carried the ball down the right but over-hit his ball to the overlapping Fa'Arodo and the Knights were let off the hook. The first substitution took place in the sixty-eighth minute when the Magic replaced McSorely with Pece Cergovski. He immediately found himself free on the left, cutting in and having a shot blocked. The rebound fell to Masi who shot well over the goal from the edge of the box. A minute later Barisic shot at Jevdjevic from a tight angle after a quick turn following a throw-in.

An intercept by Elvin led to him playing the ball to Kiratzoglu, who moved it on to Barisic who earned a corner. Watson took the corner which found Petrevski who headed just over the bar. In the seventy-sixth minute Barisic won the ball with a header in front of a raised boot, taking it over the halfway line but unable to find a team-mate when looking to pass on the edge of the box.

The Magic are enraptured after Carl Recchia's late late late winner

An inside ball from Elvin saw Cumming cut the ball back from the line but Jevdjevic easily claimed the ball. Altona responded with Fa'Arodo flicking a header to Curcija, who twisted and turned for an opening to shoot. His shot blocked off his boot and fell easily for Ozdemir to pick up. The Knights should have taken the lead with nine minutes remaining, after Elvin dispossessed Pece Siveski near the halfway line. He found Petrevski to his outside on the right, who fed the ball back centrally. Watson latched onto the ball but his shot was saved by the feet of Jevdjevic.

When Jevdjevic punched a corner away with five minutes remaining the Knights surrendered the momentum to the Magic in a frantic finish to normal time. A free-kick to Altona from thirty-yards out saw Curcija hit the defensive wall and Riccobene blast the rebound over the goal. A cross from Cergovski was headed by Masi onto a Knights defender's head for a corner. The corner was headed away by Elvin, but put back into the box by Siveski. Ozdemir punched it away with Altona appealing for a penalty for handball as the ball bounced around the box before finally being cleared. At full-time the game remained scoreless, and for the second time in three weeks the two side would head into extra-time.

An early free-kick from Watson saw his skipper Elvin head wide from near the penalty spot as the Knight went agonisingly close to taking the lead. Barisic went into the book for pulling back a defender before Riccobene shot wide from an angle when arriving late to meet a cross at the far post. Watson was fouled on the edge of the box, his effort being cleared to Timmons who's volley on goal was saved by Jevdjevic. Midway through the half substitute Nick Kalmar crossed to Curcija at the far post, and his shot produced the best save of the game so far, pushing the ball off the line and then gathering the ball in the scramble that followed.

The action lapsed, until three minutes from end of the first period of extra-time. The Knights substitute Marko Kuna found Watson who made a run up the middle before over-hitting a pass to Barisic on his outside. Curcija made way for Craig Sweeney as Altona made their final substitution. When the whistle blew to signal another change of ends, the game still scoreless after 105 minutes.

Petrevski headed wide for the Knights at a corner two minutes after play resumed as the deadlock refused to be broken. Riccobene cut in from the left, making a long run inside and then shooting, Ozdemir making another great save to tip the ball over the bar. Siveski's corner saw Slave Bozinovski fire the knock down over the bar. Kiratzoglu headed the ball over to Petrevski who shot wide. With two minutes from a possible penalty shoot-out Kuna had a volley blocked at a corner. Then in the dying seconds of the game, a ball from Cergovski over the top of the Knights defence found an unmarked Recchia on the right. Ozdemir came off his line to close him down, and the bounce of the ball made the task of chipping the keeper easier for Recchia who guided the ball into the net to give the Magic a dramatic victory.

The win saw Altona capture their fourth Victorian Premiership, following three straight titles between 1995-1997. The inspirational Knights captain Craig Elvin claimed the Jimmy Rooney Medal and was the standout performer of the game. He fell to the turf after the game, shattered by the defeat. Altona had come back from two recent Grand Final defeats, in 2004 and 2006 to reclaim the mantle of champions of Victoria.

Altona Magic: B.Jevdjevic, C.Anthopoulos, H.Fa'Arodo, D.Mladenovic (N.Kalmar 77'), C.Recchia, M.Curcija (C.Sweeney 105'), P.Siveski, P.Riccobene, E.Masi, S.Bozinovski, T.McSorely (P.Cergovski 70')

Yellow Cards: Anthopoulos 32' Mladenovic 38' Riccobene 60'
Red Cards: None
Goal: Recchia 120'

Melbourne Knights: S.Ozdemir, S.Iosifids, M.Grbesa, C.Watson, A.Barisic, J.Timmons (T.Milardovic 116'), J.Cumming, C.Elvin, Z.Petrevski, S.Piorkowski (M.Kuna 77'), A.Kiratzoglu.

Yellow Cards: Iosifidis 10' Petrevski 60' Barisic 93' Kiratzoglu 115'

Red Cards: None
Goals: None

Man of the Match: Craig Elvin (Melbourne Knights)
Venue: Bob Jane Stadium
Crowd: 5000

Knights' Craig Elvin can't hide his anguiish after coming so close

By Mark Boric

Photos by Peter Kakalias

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BOX HILL INTER WFC

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HEIDELBERG UNITED WFC

BOX ROCKS!

Digi Does The Damage For Inter as Bergers Fail to Sizzle

Box Hill Inter won its fourth Women's Premier League title in five years at Bob Jane Stadium on Sunday, seeing off the challenge of 2007 champion Heidelberg United in a close encounter. Daniela Digiammarco, joint Gold Medal winner with her team mate Anthea Vardakas, capped off an impressive week for her personally as she was named Best on Ground, before lifting the WPL Trophy as captain of the triumphant Box Hill side.

The teams were greeted by warm, sunny conditions, which also brought out an enthusiastic crowd of around 300 for the start of the match. Both teams enjoyed vocal support, and with fans keen to renew rivalries forged in last year's Grand Final, which featured the same two sides.

Box Hill Inter got the game underway, shooting towards the city end of the ground, and it stated its attacking intentions right from the kick off, with Amanda Lawless making a jinking run at the Heidelberg defence, before losing possession on the edge of the United penalty area. The early impetus belonged entirely to Inter, which had clearly come out to atone for last year's Grand Final disappointment. Inter controlled possession, and looked sharp, knocking the ball around crisply and sending probing balls forward down the flanks at every opportunity. Indeed, Heidelberg could not get hold of the ball, managing only one foray into the Inter half in the opening five minutes. In that time, Inter could have been one goal to the good already, with Lawless having two good chances to score. The first came from a good deep cross from the right, but her first touch was too heavy and allowed United custodian Angela Vidic to collect easily. The second, and better, opportunity came when Louisa Bisby was set free down the left, and she squared the ball across the face of goal. The cross was half cut out, but she managed to stab it across, only for Lawless to blaze over.

Heidelberg's first real opportunity did not come until the twenty minute mark, when it won a free kick in the right channel, which was whipped in beautifully by Meghan Archer. The cross was met by the head of Lucy Balta, but her header lacked sufficient power or direction, and was easily claimed by Inter goalkeeper, Melissa Barbieri. It had a better opportunity five minutes later, when Belinda Pannella angled a diagonal pass from the right wing through to Melanie Camilleri in the Inter penalty area. She held the ball up and squeezed through a ball across the face of goal, but it was hacked behind by some desperate Inter defending, as Balta was waiting to pounce.

Despite Box Hill's dominance, both in terms of possession and territory, it was unable to convert that into goals, and became increasingly frustrated as the half progressed. Heidelberg grew in confidence as Inter failed to capitalise, and the game became much more even as the half drew to a close. The last ten minutes yielded an excellent chance for each side, but neither was able to make it count. Ten minutes before the interval, Camilleri put Balta clean through in front of goal, but she lacked the pace to reach the ball in time to pull the trigger effectively, and instead her soft shot was easily claimed by Barbieri. Five minutes later, Georgia Koutrouvelis skipped past a challenge on the left flank, passed inside to Bisby, who nudged the ball on to Lawless on the right side of the penalty area. Her deep cross to the back post was headed back across goal by Jessica Humble, and Bisby met it almost on the goal line, and a goal seemed certain. However, somehow Vidic managed to keep the ball out, and Archer scrambled it clear to remove the danger.

Box Hill started the second half by replacing Krystal McCluskey with veteran striker Belinda Pacella, but it was unable to exert the same kind of control over the game as in the first half. The match became much more even, with both sides tiring noticeably in the warm, blustery conditions, and the pace and intensity of the game dropped. Chances were at a premium, and neither side was able to effectively control possession.

The deciding goal came on the hour mark, and fittingly, it was the Inter captain that found the net. Daniela Digimmarco began the week collecting the WPL Gold Medal, and finished it scoring the only goal in the Grand Final. Inter won a free kick on the left wing, and the ball was floated into the box by Lawless. It was met by the head of Pacella, who flicked it towards goal. Digiammarco reacted quickest, and headed the ball across the goal and into the left corner, leading to wild celebrations among the Inter supporters.

Heidelberg could have drawn level five minutes later when a lovely ball from Balta set Pannella free in the box. She squared for substitute Heleena Alatsas, but her first time shot was deflected over for a corner thanks to a last ditch tackle from the Inter defender. United has an almost identical opportunity with seconds left in the game, when Pannella again squared the ball from a similar position, only for Megan Thornton to blaze over from all of three metres out. In between, Heidelberg had Vidic to thank for ensuring that the gap between the sides did not increase, after she pulled off two smart saves to deny Inter. The first was especially impressive, as she threw herself to her right to make a one-handed stop from a fierce Bisby drive, after the ball had spilled loose from an Inter corner. The ball was then half cleared, but was driven back in from deep, only for Vidic to again thwart Inter.

The match finished with flurry of substitutions, with both sides making changes, but none did anything to change the scoreline. Heidelberg could have forced the game in to extra time, to which it is no stranger, but Thornton's miss proved costly in the dying seconds. And so the season decider finished 1-0 to Box Hill, with Inter reclaiming its WPL title after a year's hiatus. Having led the competition virtually all season, losing just twice, and with the team featuring the joint Gold Medalists, it was a fitting end to another impressive campaign from the WPL benchmark side.

By Niki Cook

Photo by John Punshon

Box Hill keeper Melissa Barbieri has no trouble dealing with a Heidelberg cross

Daniela Digiammarco chaired to the presentation ceremony by team=mates

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	9.40 pm	Fox Sports 2
Sat Sep 27	**Fulham v West Ham**	
	11.55 pm	Fox Sports 2
Sat Sep 27	**Aston Villa v Sunderland**	
	11.55 pm	Viewers Choice
Sat Sep 27	**Manchester United v Bolton**	
	11.55 pm	Viewers Choice
Sat Sep 27	**Newcastle v Blackburn**	
	11.55 pm	Viewers Choice
Sat Sep 27	**Stoke v Chelsea**	
	11.55 pm	Viewers Choice
Sun Sep 28	**Arsenal v Hull**	
	2.25 am	Fox Sports 2
Sun Sep 28	**Portsmouth v Tottenham**	
	10.25 pm	Fox Sports 2
Sun Sep 29	**Wigan v Manchester City**	
	12.55 am	Fox Sports 2

SETANTA

Monday 22nd September
2:30pm SPL Rangers vs Motherwell
10:30pm SPL Kilmarnock vs Celtic

Tuesday 23rd September
0:30 MUTV: EPL Chelsea vs Man Utd
4:30am Blue Square Premier League LIVE Kettering vs Burton
7pm Football Matters

Wednesday 24th September
4:30am German DFB Cup LIVE Schalke vs Hannover
11pm Barca TV: La Liga Sporting Gijon vs Barcelona

Thursday 25th September
4am Scottish League Cup LIVE Partick vs Rangers
1pm Scottish League Cup Celtic vs Livingston

Friday 26th September
4:30am Blue Square Premier League LIVE Grays vs Stevenage
2:30pm Blue Square Premier League Oxford vs Cambridge

Saturday 27th September
4am Bundesliga LIVE Koln vs Schalke
7pm I'm on Setanta Sports
7:05pm Friday Football Show
11:55pm SPL LIVE Celtic vs Aberdeen

Sunday 28th September
1:55am Serie A LIBE Sampdoria vs Juventus
4am Irish League Cup Final LIVE Wexford vs Derry
2pm Bundesliga Dortmund vs Stuttgart Football
10pm SPL LIVE Hibernian vs Rangers

Monday 29th September
9pm SPL Hibernian vs Rangers

Tuesday 30th September
0:00 MUTV: EPL Man Utd vs Bolton
4:30am Blue Square Premier League LIVE Rushden vs Altrincham
7pm Football Matters

Wednesday 1st October
0:00 Chelsea TV: EPL Stoke vs Chelsea
8:30pm Barca TV: La Liga Espnayol vs Barcelona

Thursday 2nd October
11:30pm UEFA Cup LIVE Wisla Krakow vs Tottenham

Friday 3rd October
3:30am UEFA Cup LIVE Standard Liege vs Everton

The Wisdom of Wade

Paul Wade, 47, the former Socceroos captain, was in Hobart this week to conduct junior coaching clinics, which now take up a large part of his life.

"I love coaching kids," Wade said. "I don't need all the pressure and all the other stuff that goes on at a higher level.

"I've always been interested in development, and these kids, a lot of them, are not going to become Socceroos or Matildas, but if they're having fun, there's a lot of satisfaction in that."

Wade made his debut for the Socceroos in Hobart against a Tasmanian XI in 1984.

He went on to win 84 full 'A' caps for Australia and represented his country at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul. Wade represented Australia 118 times in all. He is confident that the current Socceroos will qualify for the World Cup in South Africa in 2010.

"After the win against Uzbekistan, I'm confident we can qualify," he said.

"The first two out of our group of five go through and I think the key is our next game in Brisbane against Qatar.

"If we win that, I wouldn't say we're home and hosed, but I'd put my house on it."

Wade is impressed by the impact the A-League has had on Australian soccer.
"It's a heck of a lot better than the old NSL and the crowds prove it," he said.
"Many players from my era, and after that, could have got a game, no problems.

"But, I think if you threw a blanket over the whole generation now, you'd have to say they're quicker, and their touch on the ball is better.

"Players such as Paul Trimboli and Oscar Crino would have just waltzed into the A-League and tore them apart."

Wade said the people who ran Australian soccer when he played were doing their best, but they didn't have the money that is available today.
"They had one person doing three people's jobs, and you can't do it," he said.

"Yes, it was amateurish, but you can't blame the people who actually tried to run it because I think that's the way the game was.

"Today, money and advertising helps."You would never have known that the old NSL was playing in summer.

"People today know that Sydney FC are playing and they know who they're playing.

"I heard an ad on TV and I heard an ad on radio and I've seen a big banner on the M4 that carries all the people out to the west of Sydney, a billboard, saying that Sydney FC are playing Melbourne Victory.

"You didn't get advertising like that in the days of the old NSL.

"It's all in the advertising and the perception is that this game in this country is big.

"Our crowds are equalling those of the National Rugby League."

By Walter Pless

Photos by Walter Pless

CHALKITIS, GREENS SPLIT

HARRY Chalkitis's second stint as senior coach of State One outfit Bentleigh Greens is over but the experienced mentor remains keen to coach at either Premier League or Division One level.

A recent meeting between Chalkitis and the Bentleigh Greens committee confirmed a parting of the ways albeit that Chalkitis had expected to be at the helm next season.

"I expected to be there for another year but during the last month of the season I started to get some vibes that maybe all was not well," said Chalkitis.
"The club was supportive while I was there so I'm actually leaving on good terms and I think I left behind a lot. I certainly educated the club in terms of sports science and I completely revamped the under–21 side which won the championship this season."
Chalkitis replaced Vlado Vanis as senior coach of the Greens after the club's 5–1 home loss to Langwarrin in round 14 last year. The seniors finished the 2007 season in fourth position and this season Chalkitis guided the side to a fifth-placed finish.
During Chalkitis's first spell with the Greens in the 1990s he led the club into the Premier League finals five seasons in a row.
In 2001 he guided Port Melbourne to the minor premiership only to lose the grand final to Heidelberg on penalties. That season he won his second Coach of the Year award.
Chalkitis is the only coach to have taken both the Victorian state men's team and a women's team to China and is a former head coach of Football Federation Victoria's National Training Centre program for girls.

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Craig Foster

FOZZIE: NO FOOTBALL MUPPET

Goal! Weekly's Walter Pless probes the thoughts of SBS Cheif Football Analyst Craig Foster who was in Hobart during the week to conduct coaching clinics with Paul Wade.

Naomi Hannaford, from clinic organisers "Tasmanian Sports Camps", with Craig Foster at the clinic

Walter Pless: You must be pleased with the way the Socceroos are going?
Craig Foster: The results have been excellent and Verbeek, the coach, I think he's done an excellent job of managing the way through what is a very tricky qualifying campaign.

Often - I'd say roughly fifty per cent of the time - the football has been excellent, and fifty per cent it hasn't been brilliant. Of course, as football fans, we'd love to see them play outstanding football every time.

I think some of that is probably down to the fact that he came in very late. He only had a couple of months to get hold of the team. He had very little time to prepare them and to get into the campaign itself, so he's really managed, his management of the campaign strategy and logistics has been unbelievably good.

The win against Uzbekistan, I would probably rate it at least as one of the top ten World Cup qualifying away performances ever, so it was exceptionally good in almost all regards and they're set up now beautifully. Seven games to go, and if they win their home matches, basically, they're through.

WP: Do you think they will qualify?
CF: Well, I'm a typical fan. I go from extremely positive to extremely negative, all in the space of a day, basically. 'I don't know' is the simple answer, because it's not easy. It's extremely tough.

Japan are strong, Qatar are improving. Bahrein is the team, really, we should have their measure fairly comfortably.

What I can say is that they couldn't possibly be in a better position to qualify. They're extremely strong at home, Australia. I think the China game, only a couple of months ago, was basically the Olyroos and that was the first time we lost a home World Cup qualifier for many, many years, maybe twenty years or something.

So, at home, we have to be extremely confident. We're very tough to beat. The Aussie players love to play in front of their home crowd. They'll get fantastic support from Australia now, all walks of life, so, we've got to be really confident about getting those home results and that will see them through.

And the other thing is we've been quite fortunate, really, because we have the weaker of the two groups. The other group is, I think, a bit stronger than us.

What I'm very confident of is that we will absolutely, or should, absolutely, make the top three, and that keeps us alive. But, at the moment, we're right in the box seat to make the top two automatic qualification for 2010.

WP: Are you happy with the A-League?
CF: I'm happy in a lot of ways and I'm unhappy in some. That's just the nature of the beast, the nature of the sport, and it's the nature of a football lover.

I'm extremely pleased with the traction that the A-League has gained in the sporting landscape in this country, which is an extremely tough one, and in the hearts and minds of Australians.

The crowds have been excellent. This season is a bit of a challenge at the moment, partly because of the Olympics, and the finals in the other codes, but that'll come good.

The clubs have already, after only three seasons, there's two clubs already out of eight, making a profit. That's an extraordinary result in only three years for a fledgling professional league. So, all of the indicators are brilliant.

I'd like to see some of the technical side change, but that's a matter of evolution, I think, in terms of the coaching, in terms of some of the play, and all those types of things. They're all points up for discussion for change over the next five years to better support our national teams.

But, you know, we've all got to be very pleased with the way the league's grown.

WP: Is there a place for Tasmania, possibly, eventually?
CF: I'd love to see Tasmania in. I think these areas, such as, for instance, North Queensland, I like, but Canberra, Tasmania, even perhaps in future, Darwin, for instance, they're very important, because the simple reason is this, that it capitalises on one of the strengths of our code, and that is, we are the strongest nationally, right across the country.

We all know that AFL in the southern States is extremely strong, but they struggle in many of the other ones. We know that the same applies for Rugby League, and the same applies for Rugby Union.

Our code may not be the strongest in all of them, yet it is the strongest across all of them. That's why it's important, because we are the only really true national football code, and we have to take advantage of that.

Tasmania has a very strong history in football. It has a strong development system, and it has the right to participate in a national football competition. I'd love to see a team come from here.

WP: SBS was the flagship of Australian football. Do you think it's been side-lined a little bit by pay TV and, if so, are you disappointed?
CF: Well, I'm not sure it's been side-lined, but, my view on the issue is simply this, that I'm not a huge fan of sporting rights, of sporting competitions, being pay-per-view.

I just don't, philosophically, I don't really agree with that in the sense I'm from Lismore, which is a country area. Many of the people there, and in country and regional areas, cannot afford to pay monthly sums just to watch the sport that they love. So, there are many, many kids missing out.

Now, if the A-League has to be on pay TV because of the revenues, it needs the money, then okay, we can accept that. But I can never accept the Socceroos, the national team, being on pay TV.

I think it's a disgrace. I think that the government was wrong in not having it on the anti-siphoning list and, to me, to think that Indigenous populations in central Australia, regional and country areas, and this huge population base of Australian kids can't see the Socceroos play because they can't pay, I think it's disgraceful.

In terms of SBS, the game is growing and SBS has to remain relevant. This is the beauty of the growth of the game. Pressure is on everyone to perform, to maintain a role. That's the nature of growth in the sport. I think it's fantastic for the sport and there's no problem whatsoever.

WP: You mentioned the Indigenous factor. Do you think Australian football taps into the Indigenous population enough?
CF: Well, no. We've always neglected it and Australian football has neglected many, many things, and it's all starting to come around now.

I know there are concrete plans at the governing body, at the FFA, to put some programs in place to start to really support Indigenous kids. We've had some wonderful success in the last year with Travis Dodd and Jade North both being captains of their respective A-League teams and Jade North, the first Indigenous captain of a football team to win a national league title. It was wonderful stuff. Those two are great ambassadors and the game needs to utilise them more as well.

But, I often say to people, okay, well you tell me which Indigenous area in central Australia has FOX? You tell me which Indigenous community, you know, can pay $80 or $100 a month to watch the A-League?

I mean, you need to also promote your game whilst you need to show the kids, you know, and then give them an opportunity, and, you know, I'd question how much we're doing that when you're charging also for people to be watching it. I think, you know, there's a bit of mismatch there.

By Walter Pless

Photos by Walter Pless

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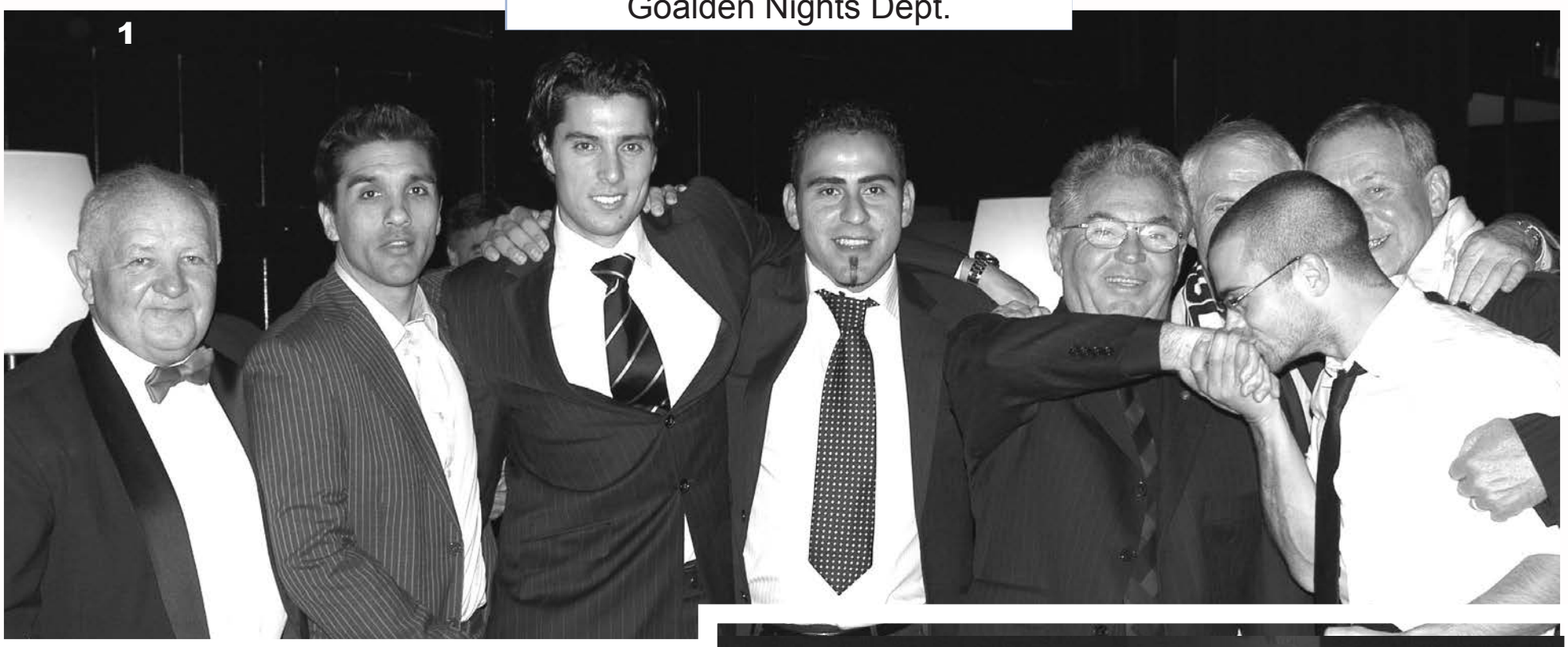
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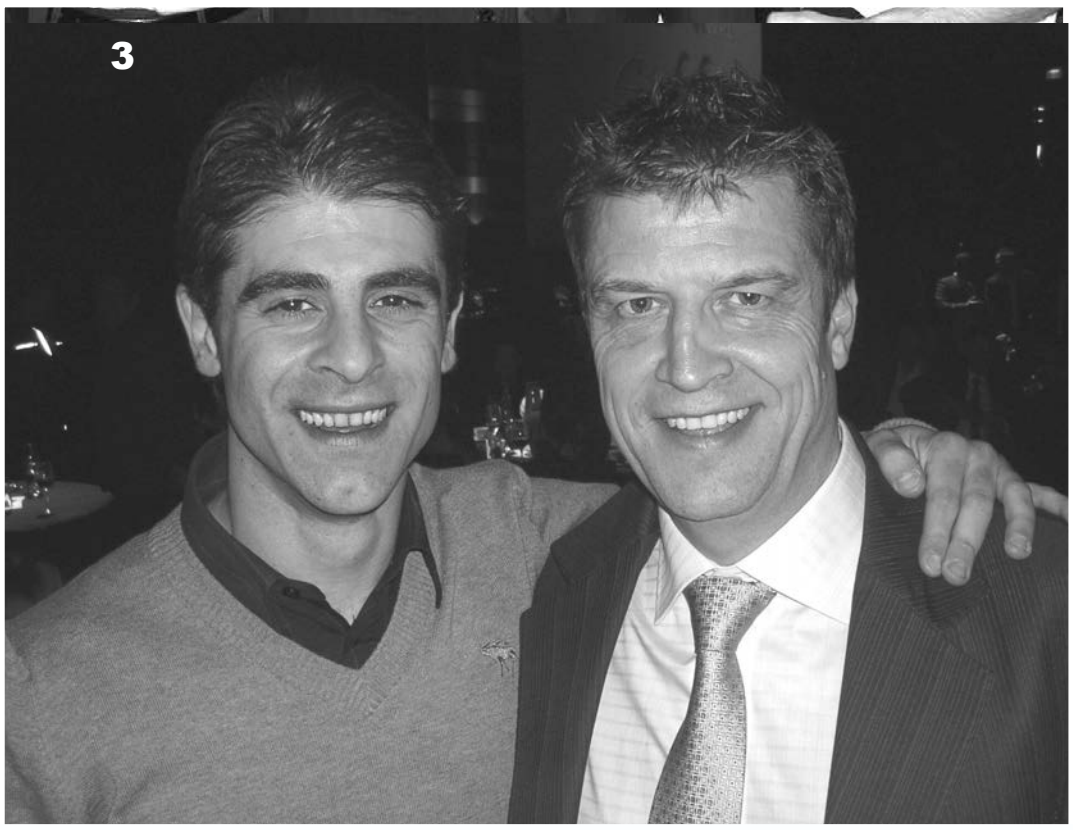
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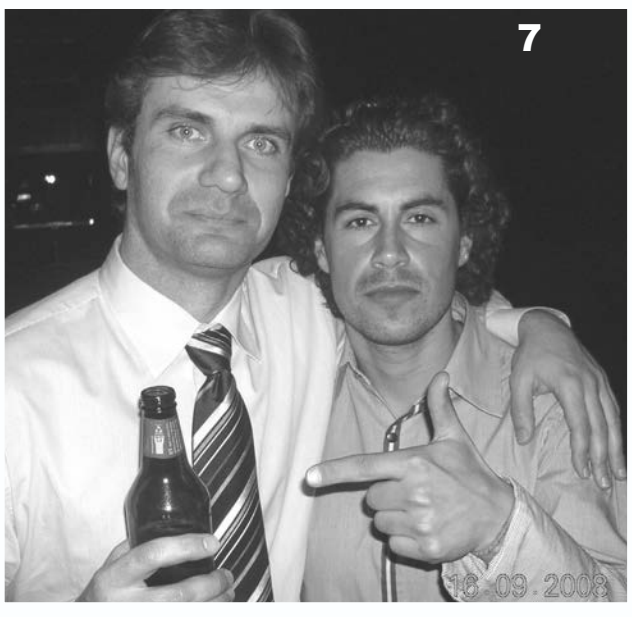
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GOLD MEDAL GALLERIA

1. The Richmond Eagles table with Eddie Zerbin, Pablo Cardozo, Jessie Krncevic, Upfield United's Wally, Helmut Kalitzki and Graham Hockless. Manfred Kalitzki and Gary Steinborn are partly obscured. 2. Heidelberg Warriors Mariza Bonnici, Lucy Balta, Melanie Camilerri, Helen Alatsis and Knights keeper coach Mate Grgic. 3. Oakleigh's Billy Damianos and Knights coach Chris Taylor. 4. Stan and Aki from Oakligh Cannons. 5. The Ashburton girls are all smiles. 6. Mark van Aken (Soccer International), James Willoughby (SEN), Paddy Higgs (The Leader), Michael Lynch (The Age), Simon Hill (FoxSports), Stefan Paoli (SEN) . 7. Green Gully's Dean Fak and Andy Vargas. 8.Eltham North's Sarah Gooney, Katrina Smith and Tara Conti. 9. The FFV crew. 10. With umpteen Gold medals and WPL championships between them Daniela Digiammarco, Anthea Vardakis and Georgia Koutrouvelis get to take the ball home too.. 11. The Heidelberg Warriors proudly pose with their Golden Boy, Graham Hockless. From left, Tim Paton, Louie Petrentis, Jim Drossos, Peter Gavalas, daniel Jones, Mark Tsiorlas, denis Alilovic, coach George Katsakas, President Katsakas. In the front we have Eric Vassiliadis, Graham, Tony Ouliaris and Marinos Gasparis.

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More recently, in 2007 the Kiwis invaded our centre in a Tri Nations tournament over two days. An Under 21's competition along with an Open tournament was played. The favour is most surely going to be returned with a trip to New Zealand planned in 2009.

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Photo by Daniel Flis

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RICHMOND EAGLES FC

FULL NAME: Pablo Fabricio Cardozo
BIRTHPLACE: Buenos Aires, Argentina
BIRTH DATE: 23-12-1972
HEIGHT: 178cms
WEIGHT: 74kgs
MARRIED: Not yet
CAR: BMW M3
OCCUPATION OUTSIDE OF FOOTBALL:
Café inspector
NICKNAME: Pabs
PREVIOUS CLUBS: NSL; Sydney Olympic, West Adelaide, Northern Spirit, Parramatta Power O/S; Rapid Vienna (Austria), Athinaikos (Greece)
REPRESENTATIVE HONOURS:
4 Socceroo caps (1 goal)
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FAVOURITE FOXTEL CUP PLAYER:
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FUNNIEST MOMENT IN FOOTBALL:
The banta in the change room at Richmond
BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT:
Not given the chance to play A-League…yet!
WORST INJURY: Thank God, nothing major
MOST DIFFICULT OPPONENT: All of them
FAVOURITE AWAY GROUND:
Anywhere there's a crowd present..
SUPERSTITIONS: They don't exist
TYPICAL MATCH DAY MEAL:Prosciutto & salad roll
WHAT ARE YOUR STRENGTHS:
My aerial ability & defensive qualities
WHAT ARE YOUR WEAKNESSES:
Classy ladies with blue eyes…
FAVOURITE TEAM WHEN GROWING UP:
Real Madrid
FAVOURITE OTHER SPORTS: Tennis & Basketball
FAVOURITE OTHER SPORTSPERSON:
Pete Sampras & Michael Jordan
FAVOURITE FOODS: Asado & Paella
FAVOURITE ACTOR/ACTRESS:
Too many to mention…
HOBBIES: Jet skiing
FAVOURITE HOLIDAY RESORT:
South beach, Miami
FAVOURITE NIGHTSPOT: Ravesi's, Bondi Beach
IDEAL DATE: Anywhere with my gf
FAVOURITE TV SHOWS:
Two & Half Men and all travel shows.
FAVOURITE MUSIC: Latino, House & Gospel
FAVOURITE FILM: Too many to mention…
Shawshank Redemption for the 1000th time anyone?
LAST SOCCER SHIRT YOU BOUGHT:
Oddly enough, I've never bought one!
FUNNIEST RUMOUR YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT YOURSELF: That I'm going to be the next marquee signing in the A-League??
BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON CAREER:
Jesus Christ & family
BIGGEST DRAG IN SOCCER:
The pitches in the VPL!
FOOTBALL AMBITION:
To play as long as possible and professionally again.
YOUR TIP FOR THIS YEAR'S FOXTEL CUP:
Whoever won yesterday…it should have been Richmond!

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ALTONA MAGIC FC

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS 2008

Photo: Peter Kakalias

FOXTEL CUP GRAND FINAL 2008 I ALTONA MAGIC 1-0 MELBOURNE KNIGHTS I SUNDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2008 I BOB JANE STADIUM

THAT WAS THE SEASON THAT WAS

FEBRUARY

Goal! Weekly rolls off the press for its fourth season and commemorates the 50th Anniversary of the Victorian Premier League in its first edition of the 2008 season.

The VPL consists of 16 teams with four set to be relegated at season's end in order to reduce the competition to 12 teams in anticipation for the 2009 season.

Frankston Pines returns to the Premier League as champions of State League Division One, with Coburg United to make its debut in the big time after finishing runners-ups to the peninsula side. The AIS also takes its place in the competition with its home matches to be played in Canberra.

Preston Lions loses the backbone of its championship winning squad (Pece Siveski to Magic, Zoran Petrevski to Knights, Savvas Ozdemir to Knights, Steven Pace to Melbourne Victory, Jon Munoz to Cannons), whilst other notable off-season transfer moves include Pablo Cardozo (Cannons to Eagles), Graham Hockless (Eagles to Heidelberg), Adrian Cagalj (Knights to Cannons), Steven Tilovski (Blues to Gully), brothers Stelios and Ari Drakos (Zebras to Cannons) and twins Koce and Kole Delev (Magic to Gully). Not to be outdone, the new boys also get the chequebook out as Esala Masi (Cannons to Pines), Andy Vlahos (Heidelberg to Coburg, Tansel Baser (South to Coburg), Anthony Magnacca (Georgies to Coburg) and Sime Kovacevic (Phoenix to Coburg) also sign on the dotted line with new clubs.

The new season kicks off with a bang as Preston Lions opens its defence of the Foxtel Cup crown with a 5-1 drubbing by a rampant Richmond Eagles. Former NSL star Pablo Cardozo repays the faith to his new employers with a second half hat trick. Coburg United also burst out of the blocks with an emphatic 3-0 opening day victory over Western Suburbs.

The FFV announces that it intends staging Foxtel Cup fixtures in regional Victorian centres, such as Shepparton, Ballarat and Albury, in an attempt to add an extra dimension to the local interest of the world game in Victoria.

The Newcastle Jets hit the heights as it defeats arch rival Central Coast Mariners 1-0 in the A-league Grand Final in front of 36,354 fans at the Sydney Football Stadium. Mark Bridges scores the all important winner just after an hour of play, while heated scenes mar the end of the match as referee Mark Shield turns down two genuine Mariner penalty appeals in the dying minutes of the match. Amid the protests Daniel Vukovic loses his cool and manhandles the referee earning him a red card and subsequent lengthy suspension which forces him to miss the Beijing Olympics.

The Socceroos record a convincing 3-0 home win against Qatar to get its 2010 World Cup campaign off to a great start.

Meanwhile the news isn't so good on the club front for Harry Kewell as Liverpool gaffer Rafeal Benitez tells the 29 year old injury ravaged forward, "It's me, not you", and hints that places will at best be limited at Anfield next season. Kewell is relieved to know that UB40 forms are in abundance throughout Merseyside.

The Jets take out the "Toilet Seat" for a dry

MARCH

Hooliganism raises its ugly head again after the VPL match between long time rivals Preston Lions and South Melbourne. A group of fans clash at Ruthven Station prompting police and the FFV to postpone the following week's fixture between the Cannons and the Lions.

The FFV releases its long awaited Strategic Plan which proposes a switch to a summer zone competition comprising of eight metro and four rural representative teams.

The Melbourne Knights announces an official allegiance with Croatian First Division heavyweight Dinamo Zagreb in order to create a clear pathway for players to Europe. Exciting youngsters Mate Dugandzic and Danny Visovic are the first to go, following in the same footsteps as Mark Viduka and Eddie Krncevic from season's past. Visiting Dinamo Managing Director, Damir Vrbanovic, arrives for the Knights v Magic VPL match at Knights Stadium courtesy of an Elite Cranes helicopter and also announces that the Croatian champions intend to tour Australian in June. It appears there was no more room in the helicopter to bring the rest of the squad out and the tour never eventuates.

Melbourne Victory partakes in its first ever AFC Champions League encounter, overwhelming its Korean equivalent Channum Dragons 2-0 at Telstra Dome thanks to a Kevin Muscat penalty and a Rodrigo Vargas header. The win puts Victory on top of its group as Thailand's Chonburi and Japanese heavyweight gamba Osaka draw 1-1 in their opening fixture.

Italy's Juventus popped in for a latte in Lygon Street

Australia's other AFC representative, Adelaide United, also tops its group after defeating Korea's Pohang Steelers with the same result.

The Foxtel Cup coaching carousal gets into the swing of things by round eight as two coaches exit stage left. Kon Pappas is replaced by former Socceroo Ken Murphy at Western Suburbs, and Johnny Anastasiadis drops a bombshell at South Melbourne after handing in his resignation following a 0-3 home defeat to Green Gully. The 2006 Foxtel Cup winning coach is replaced by another former Lakeside favourite in Michael Michalakopoulos.

In Match day 3 of the ACL Melbourne Victory slump to its second successive defeat after they were on the wrong end of a seven goal thriller against J-league powerhouse Gamba Osaka. With only the top team progressing from each group its foray into Asia already hangs by a thread.

Striker Esala Masi sensationally walks out on the Frankston Pines claiming he hasn't been paid in five weeks, a claim the Pines strenuously denied. Altona Magic, Richmond Eagles and Doveton clamber for the former Fijian international's signature with the western suburbs side winning the race.

Melbourne Victory confirms rumours that Italian Serie A superstar club Juventus will make a pit stop in Melbourne to play a friendly match and grab a latte at Lygon Street in the last leg of its Asia Pacific Tour. With Euro 08 set to take place around the same time, it is evident that most of its international stars will most likely be on national duty.

New South Melbourne coach Michael Michalakopoulos basks in a 6-2 hiding of Western Suburbs in his first home match in charge at Bob Jane Stadium.

It all becomes too much for coach Adam Jamieson at the Pines as he too farewells the Foxtel Cup, winless after nine games and firmly placed at the foot of the ladder on 2 points. At the other end of the table Green Gully holds top spot on 23 points, Knights are second with 22 points and Richmond Eagles flying high in third with 20 points.

Victory's Oriental odyssey is short lived as it succumbs to a 2-0 away defeat in Osaka to Gamba and effectively ends its ACL campaign as it slumps to the bottom of the four team group. In contrast, Adelaide United remains undefeated in first place and in a solid position to make history as the first Australian club to progress to the next stage.

APRIL

The Victorian state government gives football a major boost when it pledges $750,000 to the development of the code. The funding will be allocated to initiatives and programs that will benefit Victoria's football community. Projects earmarked include a ~~Volunteer Recognition Program, Grassroots~~ Certificate Training and Small Sided Games Communication Strategy.

Meanwhile, in the same week Goal! Weekly publishes its 100th edition. The independent weekly football fanzine that gives coverage primarily to Victorian grassroots football and is produced by a pool over 50 dedicated volunteers, celebrates the milestone after its first issue rolled off the press in February 2005.

Peter Ollerton call it quits as coach of the Whittlesea Zebras. The World Cup '74 Socceroo cites the distance to Epping Stadium from his home in the outer eastern suburbs as the major factor for his decision. With the price of petrol reaching record levels who can really blame him. 1987 Gold Medallist Paul 'Harold' Harris is caretaker for a couple of weeks before Ivan Jolic is officially appointment.

MAY

Esala Masi scores a hat trick in a derby debut as Altona Magic defeat rivals Preston Lions 3-2 at Connor Reserve.

Portsmouth lifts the English FA Cup for the

Victory's Allsopp and Ward in the ACL

Thanks For The Memories Dept.

THAT WAS THE SEASON THAT WAS

Sir Alex gets his prize

first time since 1939 after defeating Cardiff City thanks to a single Kanu goal.

European leagues reach their climax as Manchester United (England), Bayern Munich (Germany), Lyon (France), Real Madrid (Spain), Inter Milan (Italy), Porto (Portugal), PSV (Holland), Celtic (Scotland) and Olympiakos (Greece), to name a few, are all crowned champions in their respective domestic competitions. Socceroo Scott MacDonald finishes top scorer in Scotland with 25 goals.

The Russian Roulette of penalties gifts Manchester United the UEFA Champions League after it defeats Chelsea in a rain soaked final played in Moscow. John Thierry slips and misses his deciding spot kick making Edwin Van Der Saar the hero after scores were locked 1-1 at full time. The victory coincided with the 40th year anniversary of when the Red Devils first took the trophy back to Old Trafford, and 50 years since members of the Busby Babes were killed in the Munich air disaster.

The FFA submits a bid to FIFA to host the 2009 and 2010 World Club Cup.

Adelaide United plays itself into Australian football history after holding out in a tense 0-0 draw against China's Chang Chun Yatai FC to qualify for the knock out stages of the Asian Champions League. Victory finishes its campaign on a high when it beats Chonburi FC 3-1 to secure second place in its group.

JUNE

Juventus hit town and hit four past Melbourne Victory as 43,357 fans watch The Grand Old Lady sink the local heroes 4-1. Australian Jess Van Stratten plays in goal for the European giant who display their might and basically field a combination of second and third string players.

Frank Lowy reaffirms the FFA's intention to host the 2018 World Cup.

The Socceroos beat Iraq 1-0 in a World Cup qualifier in Brisbane thanks to some heroics in goal by Mark Schwarzer and a Harry Kewell header. Only seven days prior to the scheduled match FIFA provisionally suspends Iraq from international competition due to political interference from the Iraqi government, which had left the match in jeopardy.

It's all aboard the couching merry go round once again in the Foxtel Cup as championship winning coach Goran Lozanovski leaves Preston to replace Joe Montemurro at Coburg. Former Lions legend John Markovski returns to the Den to rekindle the champion's defence of the title.

The Socceroos remain top of their World Cup qualifying group, equal with Qatar on 7 points after four games, even though it succumbs 1-0 to Iraq in Dubai.

The Foxtel Cup transfer window opens with a flurry of activity taking place. Notable moves include: Nick Lazareski (Lions to Coburg), Dragi Nastevski (Gully to Coburg), Peter Zois (Magic to Pines), Neven Antic (Knights to Heidelberg), Marinos gasparis (Lions to Heidelberg), Brandon Vassalo (Gully to Cannons) and former Scottish Premier League player Ryan Baldacchino signing for Magic from Gretna FC.

Pim Verbeek's Socceroos remain on course for World Cup South Africa 2010 by progressing to the next qualifying stage after downing Qatar 3-1 in Doha courtesy of a brace by Brett Emerton and a sealer from Harry Kewell.

Spain finally buries its perennial "coulda, woulda, shoulda" tag and blitzes the European Championships, winning all its matches and completing the perfect record with a 1-0 triumph over Germany in the final in Vienna. Turkey and Russia enthralled as the surprise packages, Holland looked the goods early, France disappointed once again, the hosts Switzerland and Austria left the party early, Greece bored everyone to death, but it was Spain's David Villa (Golden Boot), Xavi (Player of the Tournament) and Fernando Torres who were singing "Viva Espana" at the end.

Ole! Ole! Ole! Spain wins evrything in sight as '08 was the year of The Seleccion

JULY

Round 20 of the Foxtel Cup and the Melbourne Knights taste defeat for the first time in 2008 when it slips 0-1 at home to Coburg United. A one-time lead of seven points is now reduced to only one as Green Gully wins its catch up games and starts to breathe down the Knights' neck. The Magic look solid in third place and there's real congestion for the remaining top six spots. Cannons, Eagles, Warriors, AIS, and Lions all fancy their chances of finals football. Down the other end of the table the Pines and Blues already look goners despite the occasional giant killing act (Cannons 0-1 Pines, Pines 1-0 Gully), whilst Suburbs and last year's grand finalists, the Zebras, occupy the remaining two relegation spots. Coburg and South Melbourne hover precariously close to the drop zone and are certainly within reach of the others catching them. Only nine points separate the top six from the relegation zone.

The FFV announces that the proposed Men's Summer League will be delayed twelve months. The arrangements for the Women's version will still go ahead.

Heidelberg United is docked three championship points after a successful protest by Preston Lions, claiming that the Warriors fielded a suspended player in Denis Alilovic in the fixture at Olympic Village.

Victorian football is rocked to its foundations when 13 Foxtel Cup clubs hold a secret meeting at which they decide to unanimously dump the AIS from next season's competition.

Wet weather and power black outs cause havoc with FFV fixtures creating a backlog of catch up games. The Foxtel Cup game between Magic and Coburg is abandoned after forty five minute due to floodlight failure with the score 1-0 to the home side.

Vlado Vanis becomes the seventh coach to get the chop as he departs from the Fawkner Blues post. Former Blue Carlos Retre takes over and has a handful of games to try and salvage something out of a disastrous season.

AUGUST

The Foxtel Cup saga continues as disenchanted clubs air their grievances to the FFV's CEO Mark Rendell and threaten to boycott this year's finals and Gold Medal award night. The main issues include disapproval of the participation of the AIS in the competition as well as preferring a 14 team league as oppose to 12.

The A-league kicks off with version IV. Ernie Merrick's shopping list for the new season include Brazilian Fabiano (from Chonburi FC), Billy Celeski (Glory), Jose Louis Lopez (Costa Rica), Tom Pondeljak (Mariners) and Socceroo Michael Thwaite (AK Braan, Norway). On the way out from Telstra Dome is Adrian caceres (Mariners), Joe Keenan (released), Leandro Love (end of loan period), Ljubo Milicevic (released), Kaz Patafta (Jets) and Daniel Piorkowski (Zebras). Other notable transfers include John Aloisi, Mark Bridge and Simon Colosimo joining Sydney FC, and former Glasgow Rangers star Charlie Miller joining Queeensland Roar. Mark Bosnich completes his comeback and signs a short term deal with the Mariners.

The Foxtel Cup saga gets ugly as clubs now threaten to embroil the competition sponsor and James Merlino, Victorian Minister for Sport and Recreation and Youth Affairs, in their stoush with the FFV.

Green Gully secures the Minor premiership following a 0-1 away win to Fawkner Blues. However, the Top Six and relegation places are yet to be confirmed as the final day of the season passes. The two oustanding catch up games which complete the full 2008 fixture list, involve the Cannons (v Knights) and Coburg (v Pines), who are both desperate for points for either VPL finals or VPL survival. The matches are played on the following Wednesday and the Cannons kiss their finals hopes good bye with a 1-0 loss at Knights Stadium. The result means Preston Lions hangs onto sixth place and can defend its crown against Gully, Knights, Magic, the Warriors and the Eagles in the Top Six Series.

Meanwhile, Coburg United plays for its VPL life and defeats Frankston Pines 2-1, condemning Whittlesea Zebras to Division One for next season at its expense. Western Suburbs, Fawkner Blues and Frankston Pines are also relegated.

Clubs decide to withdraw the threat of boycotting the Foxtel Cup finals and matches go ahead as scheduled. Richmond Eagles' first ever foray into finals football is short lived as it fails to capitalise against a ten man Heidelberg United for 85 mins and pays the price by losing 2-1. In the other Elimination Final Altona Magic knocks out the reigning champs, Preston, by the same score. The Knights gain some revenge over the new Minor Premiers, Green Gully, winning the Qualifying Final 5-6 on penalties after scores are locked 1-1.

The Southern Cross FC presents its bid for a second Melbourne A-league licence to the FFA in Sydney. SCFC also announce that Mr. Football Les Murray and Mr Tennis Paul McNamee have been appointed to the bid team.

Melbourne Victory bolt to first place in the A-league after smashing the reigning champions, the Newcastle Jets, 5-0 at Telstra Dome.

Queensland Roar's Charlie Miller equals the Australian national league goal scoring record when he scores in each of his first four appearances. The only other player to achieve the feat was former Liverpool star Alun Evans, who netted in his first four appearances in the former competition (NSL) in 1978, for South Melbourne.

Sunshine Georgies fans are ecstatic as the club makes an immediate return to the Foxtel Cup after clinching the Division One championship. Dandenong Thunder finish runner up and are also promoted.

SEPT

The curse of the Minor Premiers strikes again as Green Gully crash out of the finals in straight sets losing 2-0 to Heidelberg United - the same team and scoreline when it last won a finals game; the 2005 Grand Final to be precise.

Altona Magic hold their nerve and are the first team to advance to the Foxtel Cup Grand Final after beating Melbourne Knights 4-3 on penalties with scores tied 1-1 after 120 minutes.

The Melbourne Knights bounce back the following week and book their first grand final appearance since 19 when it eliminates the inform Heidelberg Warriors 2-1.

Alltona Magic wins the 2008 Foxtel Cup after defeating the Knights 1-0.

Box Hill wind the WPL with the same scoreline and accounts revenge over Heidelberg Warriors for last year's loss.

Graham Hockless wins the Gold Medal and Pablo Cardozo takes out the Bill Fleming.

Aussie Fans At World Cup '06

FUSSBALL UND FRANKFURTERS

When Our Date With Destiny Finally Arrived

It is only two years ago since Australia played in the World Cup in Germany in 2006, but already it seems like a significant part of our past.

While the performances of the Socceroos were inspiring, the fans did their bit to make this an extraordinary occasion. There were roughly 60,000 Australians in Germany in June 2006, most without tickets, but there for the atmosphere and the off-field activities It was the largest outward movement of the Australian population since the Second World War. Books have already been written about the fans' experiences by Tony Wilson and Jesse Fink.

It was fascinating to watch the ways individuals and families responded to the occasion. Most supported Australia, some barracked for the country of their heritage, others had a bob each way. Some of my Croatian friends cut up Australian and Croatian shirts and sewed half of each together to reflect that support.

At matches the Australian national anthem was sung with a fervour not seen and heard since previous World Cup qualifiers in Australia against Iran and twice against Uruguay in Sydney and Melbourne. Yet for the most part the fans were in enormous good humour and their chants reflected that. There was much less of the staple Aussie, Aussie, Aussie, Oi, Oi, Oi that seemingly features at every major Australian sporting event. Instead there was more invention as when 'You are red, you are white and you're going home tonight,' and 'Your shirt looks like a tablecloth, da-da, da-da', was sung at the Croatians, and 'You only sing when you're whaling', at the Japanese.

In Kaiserslautern when a couple of fans tried to get those around them to join in offensive chants replete with crude language and racist overtones, one young coloured Aussie lad told them explicitly and clearly, 'We are a multicultural society and don't want any of that kind of thing here'. He clearly spoke on behalf of the surrounding Australian contingent, who collectively continued to ignore the drunken, would-be trouble makers who remained isolated throughout. Australian banners in the stadia showed that there was a clear mixture of old and new fans.

We can't lose. Photo: Joe Madunic.

One kilted Australian-Scot at the fanfest in Stuttgart, 22 June 2006. Photo: Roy Hay.

Several were in non-English languages, particularly Greek, reinforcing the sense that Australia is a multicultural country, and many reflected the club loyalties of the various ethnic groups making up the diverse Australian fanbase.

In Australia the reception of the World Cup by the mass of the people was extraordinary. This was reflected in the media which seems to have underestimated the extent of popular enthusiasm. Large screens in major venues saw crowds of several thousands gather to watch matches. Federation Square in Melbourne was packed, with some people travelling from Geelong, 80 kilometres away, to watch matches on the big screen rather than at home or in a local hotel. Crowds in Federation Square for the four Australian matches ranged from 7000 to 12 000, with a similar number at Birrarung Marr. The games finished at anywhere between three and seven in the morning. After the Australia–Japan and Australia–Croatia games a significant number of those present at Federation Square, estimated at around 2000 on the former and 4000 on the latter occasion, marched to the steps of state parliament in Spring Street as if it were a political demonstration.

At the first march one man had a banner 'Guus for PM', and the parliament steps party lasted half an hour and included the singing of the national anthem. Sydney's George Street was at a standstill in the mornings after games, with cars and pedestrians festooned with colours, shouting and celebrating.

Though the media had contributed to the build-up to the tournament and had done a great deal to promote interest and convey the extent to which the rest of the world had focused on it, the overwhelming impression is that members of the daily media were taken aback by the popular response. Many of those who had spent much of their lives denigrating 'this foreign game' admitted that they had not experienced anything, either in Germany or in Australia, to match what they saw and in which they became involved. Typical is the reaction of Gary Lyon, former Melbourne AFL player and now anchor of the Melbourne version of the Channel 9 Footy Show:

It has taken a trip to the other side of the world, to witness the most amazing sporting festival you could imagine, to see the true game of football through the eyes of those who have been championing it for decades as the biggest sport on the planet. … the World Cup is a seething mass of emotion where the passion generated by coaches, players and supporters is the closest thing to war without weapons that you are likely to find. The focus on the games reduces presidents and prime ministers to the same level as factory workers and school kids; that of the everyday sports fan.

Acknowledgement: This article draws on Roy Hay and Tony Joel, 'Football's World Cup and its fans—reflections on national styles: A photo essay on Germany 2006,' Soccer and Society, 8, no. 1, January 2007, pp. 1–32.

Words by Roy Hay

Photos sourced by Roy Hay

Australian banners in the Allianz Stadium, Munich. Photo: Roy Hay.

Now I've seen it all. Surfing on the Eisbach in Munich. Photo: Roy Hay.

Gas bagging, News & Views

BOO'S WORLD

With Mark Boric

An article in the Townsville Bulletin a few weeks ago contained the following quote: "One of the candidates for the NQFC coaching job, to be announced on Monday, alerted the club to the fact the colours had a strong link to Scottish giants Celtic and were not popular with a lot of football supporters." This candidate, Iain Ferguson, got the job. He also got the club to change thier intended colours. It is for this reason I hope that they fail. Perhaps a little like Northern Spirit did in the NSL when they formed an alliance with Rangers of Glasgow. There is no need to bring sectarian garbage into Australian football. When other ethnicities bring political and religious divisions into the game they are castigated, yet little has been made of this. The colours were going to be green and white but not, I understand, in a hoop pattern. Yet this coach, who may also be doubling up as marketing manager of the club and perhaps working in the canteen as well so he can have his finger in all the pies, found a tenuous link to Celtic because of his own bias. I seriously doubt that North Queensland is a hotbed of sectarian activism and that their crowds are reliant on what colours they wear.

Speaking of religion, I'm waiting for the Pope to come out as a character witness in the Ney Fabiano spitting case. Victory are backing thier man to the hilt. The evidence I have seen is fairly inconclusive. More damning to me is that he did it in a friendly against Green Gully. Perhaps that was an "accident" as well. He must have used up his luck that night, as it was not seen by the referee and the player he spat on, Manny Muscat, was dismissed for his retaliation. If he doesn't want the stigma of being labelled a spitter, the best advice I can give is... STOP SPITTING!

Congratulations to Graham Hockless on winning the Gold Medal last week. A great player with a tremendous attitude, he deserves the success that has come his way. Pablo Cardozo also had a good night, taking home two trophies in the Bill Fleming Medal and the Top Goalscorers Award. Another gentleman of the game getting his due reward.

Melbourne Knights have gone to the courts to get Joe Spiteri available to play in the Grand Final. Could the Victorian Premier League has it's very own Andrew Dunkley?

People still hope to see the return of the Dockerty Cup, but the legal wrangle above shows that the FFV have too much on their plate trying to run the various Leagues without throwing Cups into the mix for them to try and administer the rules for. Maybe one day...

Frank Lowy is now on the World Cup Organising Comittee. Does this make the World Cup a "plastic" competition as those that deride the A-League refer to his creation? It does mean if he gets it to be hosted by Australia, the Final is going to be played in Sydney. And we know that is just wrong.

Referee Mark Shield has retired. They wouldn't let him bring his seeing-eye dog onto the pitch to spot those pesky hand above the head handballs in the box so he is giving the game away. So it is time for a new muppet to take the dubious mantle of Australia's best referee.

We're all going on a summer holiday. The Summer League, however, will be kicking on. Though some Zones seem to have less interest than others, I have every faith in the FFV to get this competition up and running.

It's the final issue of the season, and I'd like to thank everybody who reads and supports this paper. Thanks also to the great Costa Koutropoulos for putting it altogether. Thanks to the FFV for being so incompetant there is never nothing for me to write about. Thank you linesmen, thank you ball boys. And thank you referees, how can we forget you? See you all in 2009.

KATSA'S KORNER

KATSA'S KORNER 8-26

They say that absence makes the heart grow fonder.

Not so for the good folk at the House of Darebin who would have hardly missed my absence from Goal Weekly last week.

Now last weekend was very interesting indeed, where Katsa swapped his bottle of J Walker for a Bob the Builder Hat.

Needless to say, creativity is hardly one of my strong points and in the wee hours of Sunday Morning, the Builders tools were laid down, and replaced by J Walker.

Over to the Foxtel Cup we go where there has been a late wicket.

The Scorer has been aroused, now that's a very dangerous word for some of the Punters who read this article, as arousal can at times lead them to Houses of Ill repute, searching for a Happy End.

Back to the Scorer we go, where he posted what will be the last wicket for 2008.

S Munro and the Oakleigh Cannons have mutually ended their 4 year gig together, with ex South Melbourne Legend John Anastasiadis replacing the Ex Glasgow Rangers Player at Jack's Place for season 2009.

The Oakleigh Cannons have with the exception of 2008, always been in the Finals Series, however have bowed out in straight sets on each occasion.

Time will tell if Johnny A can bring home the long awaited silverware to Jack's Place in 2009.

Over to the A-League we go where Ernie's Boys came away with a point, after Archie Thompson scored the equaliser deep into injury time, in their match against the Central Coast Mariners.

However, the Melbourne Victory have a bigger issue on it's plate this week, after their new recruit, Fabiano was found guilty of spitting at an Adelaide City Opponent recently.

For his efforts, he earned a 9 Week Suspension, and the word going around is that Ernie and Co will be appealing the 9 Match Ban.

From the footage which I saw on SBS, (Bringing the World Back Home), there were some bodily fluids leaving Fabiano, directed towards the Adelaide City Player, however, perhaps what was not picked up by the good folk who also govern the House of Darebin, and that is the House of Lowey. FFA Australia is a particular word that Fabiano directed toward his opponent.

This word has been made very famous in one of Katsas all time movie favourites, namely "Scarface", and for the uninitiated, it's a classic four letter Latino phrase starting with the Letter "P" and ending in the letter "A".

Best of luck in getting him off lads!

Having played 700 hard games against some of the States finest hacks, in the States lowest leagues of Reserve Football, one thing that I do not condone is spiting on an opponent.

Certainly if the going gets tough, a few lazy, late well timed tackles can be applied, however, spitting is the lowest form of human behaviour, and it does have associated with it certain Health threats also.

STOP PRESS...

Altona Magic have defeated the Melbourne Knights in the Foxtel Cup Grand Final, with Carl Rechia scoring in the last minute of Extra Time,

I unfortunately did not attend the Grand Final, however, seeing the Melbourne Knights name as a finalist bought back memories of the 1991 Grand final watched by a sell out crowd at Olympic Park where South Melbourne HELLAS defeated Melbourne CROATIA on penalties.

An all time classic classis encounter, where without knowing the attendance figure of this year's Foxtel Cup Grand Final, I will lay a Dozen Bottles of J Walker that the attendance of the 1991would be at least 4 times that achieved this year.

I also make no apologies for referring to these great Clubs by their traditional Ethnic names, as it was these names that attracted fans to matches.

The challenge now for the House of Darebin is to see if they can emulate these attendances with their new, yet to be released, yet to be approved, yet to be actioned, Master Plan.

As 2008 draws' to a close, this may be perhaps the last Katsas Korner for 2008, depending of course on whether Goal Weekly continues on throughout the Summer Months.

I'm sure that Costa our Editor will make some form of announcement regarding this.

To the Punters that have endured weeks of reading the various dribble that I produce, stay Healthy, Wealthy, and even less Wise so that you can do it all again in 2009.

This is Katsa – Just as you've known him.

TSIGAN'S TSIGAR

With Mike Lilikakis

Le Fin

Flipper was a grouse fish.
HA!
Itwasamammal,notafish….muahahahaha!...
ah, technology…

Well for those of you, who knew that the Flipper, was more than just a leg break which goes straight, looks like spinning in, but then kicks back in again as it hits the turf, Warnie salutes you. Whoa, yeah…bring on The Ashes.

Don't care much about football,
Ain't nuthin' y'all can compare
To a piece of lumber 'n a ball o' leather,
5 days is what I can spare.

Drinking and yahooing for 5 days, test game permitted, between 10am and 6pm!
None of this 90 minute, one or two goal "wonders".
Just good line and length, a plethora of great shots, and a handful of wickets in a day's play.

That said, the "VPL" Grand Final's were a tale of two cities.
Charles Dickens was more than some silly old fart in a Teutonic Year 12 exam, in which a catchphrase for dyslexic compeers of a bygone Industrial Age, was more than what I can spare space for.

Can you seriously believe me for a second?
I wouldn't.
Not today, anyway.

MEINE EINE KLEINE.COM

As custom dictates, I arrived 10 minutes after kickoff.
I would give you the time of day, but I just don't know you well enough.
I was quite relieved that it was still 0-0, and I wouldn't have to ask my peers, or other vagabonds associated with my alter ego, what happened and why etc….

Therefore, I can safely do the following report with the a' surety that it is all my fault that the chicks' game was better than the boys' game.

DUR FAX

The Who?
Box Hill Inter; Old School Champs. Been there, done that.
Heidelberg; The Current Champs, with something to prove.

The What?
Heidelberg set out to crush the reign of Box Hill, who has been the epitome of Women's Football c'e pas Victoria, over the past 5 years.

The When?
Um….I think, um, yep, it was last Sunday, the something of September.

The Where?
Bob Jane T-Marts, South Melbourne or Albert Park; unless and or depending if you're from Dandenong or Epping.

The Why?
Apparently, women have to be pre-occupied with more than just squeezing kids out, running a family and being the Queen of the Clan.

DELAY UND DECEPTION

I hereby choose NOT to be negative about this game.
25 minuten on ze clock when it goes into the groove, you've got to prove, you're love to me.
Thanks Ma Don Argh.
It was Global Pirate Day on Friday.

The battle had well and truly commenced.
If I was at the battle of Hastings in 1066, I reckon I would've definitely missed the first 10 minutes or close enough therein of the battle already as I desperately needed a shu-shu.

I would've sat behind Barbieri's goals but for risk of exposing myself to serious sun stroke. T'was great weather for a tryst. Initially, there was no real threat to either goal. More of a feeler than anything else. Heidelberg resorted to long balls with the wind, whilst Box Hill had to contend with trying to find any movement in the forward third.

The Heidelberg forwards were tough in their thrust and quest for penetration, but Box Hill held their resolve and sporadically managed to make inroads into the heart of the 'Bergers. Unfortunately, the defenses of both teams held their own, and didn't allow their opponents any lee-way.

If that isn't typical football lingo gist kaka, I dunno what is.

LULL A BYE BYE

"The Cavalry", i.e.: Vardakas was mopping up well and truly, but was well held by Ms. Maxa who was more pepper than Saxa. Camilleri spun, propped and chopped as Jessica tried with pride, yet still remained Humble. Bisby got busy with a few cracks at Vidic, who held her line quite sublime and stood up well during show and tell.

Balta had Daft Punk written all over her, showing poise with a little amount of noise. Fanfare requited some feel and thus Digiammarco responded with steel.
Stalin was proud.

Lawless could've broken some more rules to put on the Ritz, whilst Alatsas was playing the offside to a tee. Ross was wrapped. The last minute saw Amanda skin the panda, as her shot trimmed the upright on the buzzer, and 0-0 kept its head held high.

A mere 4 bevvies at half time as I detested walking up and down the stairs. Where's the elevator, Ref? A quick phalanx prong on my behalf towards the linesman on the far side; mate, you're not working at Heathrow bringing in 747's every 20 seconds. That flag is used sporadically, and NOT by every twitch on your trapezoid.

Le BAT El

Second verse, same as the first.
I'm Henry the Eighth oi am,
Henry the Eighth oi am oi am…
Barbieri was sharper than a Jag down Toorak Rd, claiming all forward Berger balls.
McClusky and Musky ripped the lines till dusty and Karp was fishing and wishing that Inter could finalise that Premiership condition.

As no goals were scored,
and not that I was bored,
but alas I picked up my phone and dialed a Chugga.
As I spoke, and no joke,
Box Hill won a free
and sent the ball over on bended knee.
Then up stepped Digi Beckenbauer,
And slotted a Frangelico Sour
handing the Internazionale a goal to the good.

Lawless kept cracking, Vidic kept saving, and Pannella ran a marathon. She looked dangerous every time the ball nestled into her feet. Balta caused headaches, but it was nothing the Inter Codeine Team couldn't cope with.

FORTISSIMO

As the final siren sounded, the jumping, screaming, dreaming came to a grand conclusion. Box Hill had done it again. They've taken the reigns back from the Berger, and now ride the pony into the sunset. I caught up with co-Footballer of the year and Grand Final "Man o' the Match" Daniela Digiammarco after the win and enquired as to the secret of success. She stressed that the size of the park outweighed the motion of the ocean, and short and sharp work was the key. The focus was on not forcing the issue, and grinding down the hardened Quarter Pounder defensive third. It worked to a tee.

NO PANIC. NO PRESSURE.

If only we could apply that simple philosophy in real life, there would hardly be a conspiracy theory and we'd all speak my language.
Gobble de' Gook is underrated.
GUDENACHT mein sweet Fraus und Frau Lions.

SPQR
HSV
TNT
Tsigan United FC

FOUR STRAIGHT CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR ADELAIDE CITY!

Mori's boys repeat club history of late 1950's.

The 2008 Super League Championship has gone to Adelaide City FC for the fourth successive year as they overcame their toughest opponents MetroStars in a 2-0 win at Hindmarsh Stadium on Friday night.

The Devine Homes Final 5 Series saw the Black and Whites take out the most important win of the season without the services of the Leagues 2008 Golden Boot Winner Damian Mori, who had to be content with coaching from the side lines only with his recent shoulder injury. MetroStars were without their Federation Cup goal scorer Michael Pirone, who had a surprise appendectomy earlier on in the week, but had national league experience in Scott Tunbridge, Louis Brain and David Terminello all playing against their former NSL side.

Both goals were scored in the first half of the match from set pieces, the first coming from the foot of Kristian Rees via a Freddy Agius free kick just outside the box. MetroStars keeper Daniel Godley unsighted as the ball came through a pack of players, parried the ball down directly in front of the foot of Kristian Rees who quickly slotted the ball away in the 18th minute of the match. MetroStars almost had their chance to equalise minutes later from a David Terminello corner kick that came in high and close to the cross bar, forcing City keeper Ben Moore into action to punch the ball away quickly. But it was the Adelaide City tried and trusted defence of captain Paul Pezos, Keegan Nash and Kristian Rees that had all bases covered. No matter what Metrostars threw at them via James Yong, Scott Tunbridge, Louis Brain or the 'Terminator' Terminello, the wall of defence stood strong and steadfast each time, led from the back by their keeper Ben Moore. In the 39th minute City's second goal was scored in almost identical fashion, a Freddy Agius free kick about 35 metres out, being popped in this time to the feet of Jace Cummins who drilled it past Godley. Agius yet again was instrumental in his sides win, his speed and creativity in the midfield unmatched by his opponents, with Nick Budin complementing him beautifully, as has been the case for most of the season, but especially the last week. Despite Coach Mike Barnett substituting Andrew Ciarla for Joe Costa at the half time break and the side coming out with more of a sense of urgency, MetroStars just did not have that same voracity we had seen in their last game a fortnight ago when they last defeated the reigning champions.

MetroStars Michele Lastella and Ivan Karlovich give special attention to Freddy Agius from Adelaide City in the 2008 Grand Final

For his tireless efforts Nick Budin was awarded the Player of the Match medal, his amazing fitness and racehorse like consistency being the difference in the midfield, although special mention must go to Terminello who was on fire, putting in a stellar performance for his side. It was a game that saw 30 free kicks and 9 yellow cards being recorded by 2008 Referee of the Year Stuart Smith, the unfortunate 2nd yellow awarded to Agius with about 15 minutes to go, when a tackle by MetroStars Yong was interpreted as a dive by Agius, his departure a disappointment for the zippy playmaker. Adelaide City's Young Patrick De Ruvo also had chances to put his side further in front one he came on, but chances that were not fruitful for him in this match. The game was at times end to end, well disciplined despite the number of cards but a fitting end to a side that had lost five out of their last six matches to slog it out hard to get to the top and winning at the time when it counted the most.

After the match an obviously disappointed MetroStars Coach Mike Barnett, this year looking to secure the double of Cup and Super League Championship Titles, thought that neither teams looked dangerous. "Two costly mistakes by us lead to two soft goals and that was the difference". A smiling Damian Mori said how proud he was of his players in this match. "We faced a good side and the boys fought hard. We had more to prove in this match and every single player played a part to win this game and our 4th successive championship." The last and only time this has occurred within SA Football history was from 1956 – 1959 with Juventus, a feat at that time that was unprecedented and thought very difficult to repeat. But the Black and Whites have shown just how successful a club they are as in its 62 year history Adelaide City FC they have almost racked up 20 Championship titles, that's one Championship every 4 years, a truly outstanding achievement by an outstanding club.

By Nat Adamopoulos

Photo by Adam Butler

FFSA RESULTS

DEVINE HOMES SUPER LEAGUE FINAL 5 SERIES - GRAND FINAL

MetroStars 0
Adelaide City 2 (J.Cummins, K.Rees) (HT 0-2)

Best – MetroStars (D.Terminello, I.Karlovic, M.Lastella) Adel City (N.Budin, D.Paladino, K.Nash)
Crowd: 4100

Team Line Ups
MetroStars: Godley, Menechella, Karlovic, Robertson, Stavrides, Terminello (Barisic), Brain, Lastella, Tunbridge, Ciarla (Costa (Spagnuolo)), Yong
Adel City: Moore, D'Arsie, Cummins (DeRuvo), Nash, Gooding, Negus, Agius, Pezos, Rees, Paladino, Budin

Yellow Cards
MetroStars – Menechella, Robertson, Stavrides, Brain, Tunbridge, Costa
Adel City – D'Arsie, Gooding, Agius

Red Card
Adel City - Agius

BRISBANE CITY ROLLS BACK THE CLOCK

Peninsula Power 2 (Royce Brownlie 2)
Brisbane City 3 (Evan Papadopoulos 2 inc pen, Kris Hartas)
Half Time: 1-1

Brisbane City turned the clock back to its former glory days snatching a controversial 3-2 victory in injury time against Peninsula Power in the Brisbane Premier League Grand Final at Heath Park on Saturday night.

City's grand final victory came from the penalty spot after Shaun Feuerriegel handballed a powerful shot from City's Grant Last in the third minute of time added on. Striker Evan Papadopoulos made no mistake with the penalty which delivered Brisbane City its first Grand Final triumph in 10 years.

The penalty proved gut wrenching for Peninsula Power which last year was close to being relegated before finishing second in the league and winning the Premier Cup this year.

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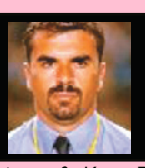

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SORRENTO WINS BATTLE OF THE WEST

On the day Sorrento received the Football West Premier league trophy, they showed all of their champion quality by coming from behind to beat Swan IC 2-1 in a hard fought match at Francis Street.

Sorrento dominate early and on 17 minutes Brodie Martin and Stuart Montgomery combined to set up Harnwell, his shot from 18-yards was blocked by Aaron Cole and Montgomery's follow up shot was saved by Hugo.

With Cole and David McNally outstanding in the heart of the Swans defence, Sorrento were struggling to break them down, and as the game went on the home side began to get into the game.

On the half hour a mistake from Gulls defender Shaun Kilkelly let in Swans Andy O'Neill. He crossed to David Paone on the edge of the box, but his shot was well wide. The Swans were having their best period of the game and two minutes later Dom Ando's curling free kick went just past the post.

As the half ended it was the visitors who were pressing and Jason Trpevski found Montgomery on the right hand side of the penalty area, his shot from the angle whistled just past the post and in stoppage time Harnwell's shot on the turn was blocked by Marshall.

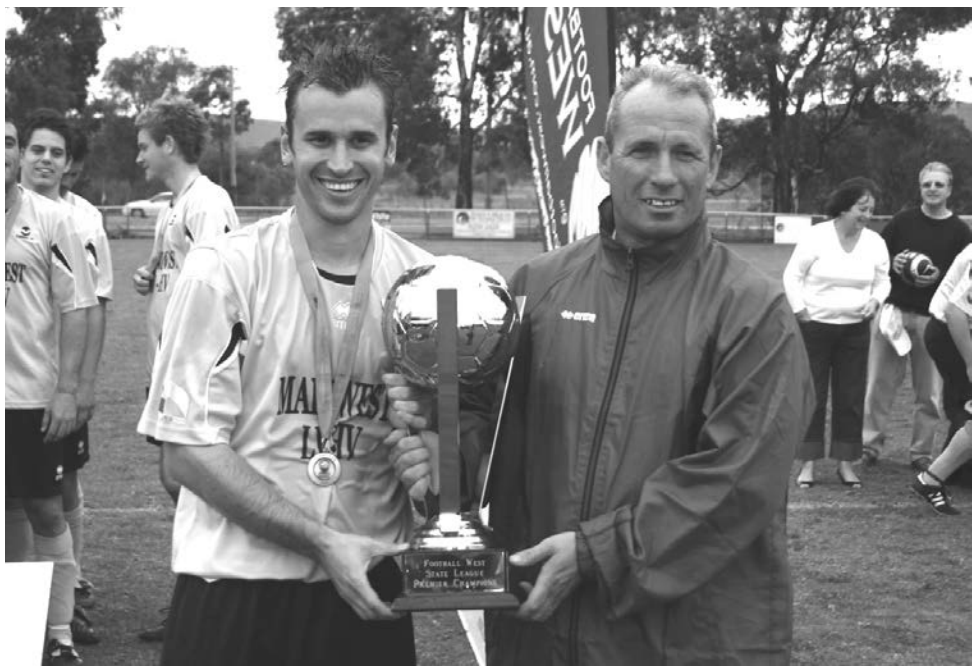
It was the home side that opened the second half on top, and O'Neill was causing the Gulls problems down the right hand side. A great run by the winger in the opening minute sent him clear of Scott Neville and his cross found the unmarked Damian Scali, but his header was straight at Neil Young.

It was O'Neill again on 49 minutes his shot from the edge of the box was fumbled by Young but no Swans players were there to finish, but their positive start to the second half was rewarded with the opening goal on 53 minutes. Swans youngster Alex Cocking found Ando on the right, he skipped past Callum O'Connell and crossed to the back post where O'Neill volleyed past Young from six-yards.

The goal seemed to lift Sorrento, as they looked to start their celebrations with a win and O'Connell's cross was flicked on by Michael Ord but Montgomery shot was saved low by Hugo.

It was no surprise when Sorrento levelled, second half substitute Keegan Loreine, who was making his league debut, was the architect. His first touch after coming on the field was a great run and pass to the Gulls top scorer Harnwell who turned on the edge of the box and fired home a stunning strike into the top corner over the keeper.

The Gulls were again on top and on



Sorrento Captain Todd Harnwell and coach Steve Neville

66 minutes Montgomery's shot on the turn was cleared off the line by O'Neill, but sixty seconds later they hit the front. Lewis Flatt's cross from the right was mis-judged by Hugo and as Ando attempted to head clear under pressure from Trpevski he headed into his own goal.

It was a great game now with both sides pressing, on 83 minutes the Swans went close when O'Neill's cross found Trent Wood, his shot was well saved by Young and James Morgan cleared the rebound.

Moments later Harnwell was sent clear and his first shot was well saved by Hugo, and the Swans keeper recovered well to save Harnwell's follow up shot.

The home side were pressing late looking for the equaliser, Hugo's kick on 86 minutes was flicked on by Scali and Dejan Djukanovic, who had just come on as a substitute, fired straight at Young when well placed.

Then sixty seconds later the Swans faithful were crying out for a penalty when O'Neill seemed to be brought down by Trpevski but referee Miller waved away their protests. In stoppage time the Swans almost snatched a point, Wood's cross from the left found Geoff Mason whose header from four-yards flashed wide of the post.

At the end of the game the Gulls were presented with the league trophy from Football West CEO Garry Chandler and the celebrations began in earnest.

Gulls Coach Steve Neville was delighted. "I played a number of young lads today and we had to battle. We had a lot of possession in the first half and we did play some good football. They started the second half well and scored, but we lifted then and Todd scored a great goal and we bundled one in to win it," said Neville

Swans Coach Paul Lincoln was happy despite the defeat. "They are a good side and were the best side in the league. We matched them for most of the game and I thought we deserved something from the game. I'm pretty proud of the boys, it took us a while to get going but we created a number of opportunities and with some better finishing we could have won it,' said Lincoln.

Teams
Swan IC – GK Hugo, Ando, McNally, Cole, Marshall (Djukanovic 72) , Wood, Paone, Knox, O'Neill, Scali, Cocking (Mason 85)
Subs not used: Sutton, Hardy, Taglioretti, Mahady

Yellow Cards – Marshall 5 (Foul on Neville)

Sorrento – GK Young, Neville (Banks 88), Ord, Kilkelly, O'Connell, Flatt, Martin (Morgan 46), Trpevski, Campbell (Loraine 56), Montgomery, Harnwell
Subs not used: Ross, York

Yellow Cards – Kilkelly 56 (Foul on Cocking), Ord 75 (Foul on Wood)

FOOTBALL WEST

FOOTBALL WEST STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Sorrento FC	22	15	4	3	59	31	28	49
Floreat Athena	22	14	3	5	47	27	20	45
Perth	22	13	4	5	48	33	15	43
Inglewood Utd	22	11	4	7	38	35	3	37
Mandurah City	22	10	6	6	57	40	17	36
Stirling Lions	22	9	6	7	42	30	12	33
Swan I.C.	22	8	3	11	42	47	-5	27
Cockburn City	22	7	5	10	45	56	-11	26
Western Knights	22	7	3	12	34	51	-17	24
Armadale	22	6	5	11	33	53	-20	23
ECU Joondalup	22	6	4	12	47	51	-4	22
Fremantle	22	0	5	17	24	62	-38	5

RESULTS - Round 22

Armadale	**2**
Stirling Lions	**2**
Fremantle Spirit	**1**
Inglewood United	**2**
Mandurah City	**3**
Cockburn City	**2**
Swan IC	**1**
Sorrento	**2**
ECU Joondalup	**1**
Floreat Athena	**3**

By Ben Fitzpatrick

Photos by Football West

Sorrento takes top honours in WA

NORTH CONVINCING WINNERS IN INTRASTATE SERIES

The Northern Tasmania Premier League representative side beat the Southern Tasmanian Premier League representative team 4-1 in the second leg of the intrastate men's series on a wet and windswept Windsor Park in Launceston on Saturday.

The result means North won the series 8-1 on aggregate, having beaten the South 4-0 in Hobart the previous weekend.

With surface water an impediment to both sides, North shrugged off the conditions and showed more commitment and better team-work than their southern counterparts.

The tall and powerful North striker, Chris McKenna, was man-of-the-match.

Alex Holmes could not subdue him and McKenna scored twice and made the other two goals following corners, which caused all sorts of difficulties for the South defence, including keeper Ben Peter.

David Cooper, who missed the first leg, put South ahead in the 6th minute, but McKenna made it 1-1 three minutes later with a pile-driver from 25 metres.

A McKenna header from a corner in the 18th minute put North in front, while Bobby Eaves made it 3-1 for the home-side on the half-hour after a knock-down by McKenna from a corner.

South had little to offer in the second half and Todd Hingston's goal, following yet another corner, made it 4-1 with 11 minutes remaining.

South's Brazilian midfielder, Igor Oliveira Sao Jose, said the North wanted the win more and were much more determined than their opponents.

Clarence United with tthe Division One Knock-Out Cup

South goalkeeper Ben Peter said the wet conditions made it difficult to get off the ground and he blamed himself for at least one of the goals.

South were missing four players from Tilford Zebras. Striker Ben Crosswell, midfielders Aaron Brazendale and Ricky Self, and defender Andrew Telega were with their club playing a friendly match in Canberra on the weekend.

In the women's second-leg intrastate match, a penalty by Kendall Brazendale 10 minutes from the end gave North a 1-0 win over South, who had been victorious 2-0 in Hobart the previous weekend and so took the series 2-1 on aggregate.

In Saturday's Southern Division One Knock-out Cup final at Wellesley Park, Christian United celebrated their 10th anniversary by collecting the trophy with a 2-1 win over Beachside.

Beachside squandered several good chances and trailed 1-0 to a goal which looked suspiciously off-side by Ashley Page on the quarter-hour.

Only good goalkeeping by Adam Smee denied Christian another couple of goals in the first half as Page and Jesse Arnold threatened.

But, Beachside should have scored through Brad Evans and Daniel Frost, who missed the target while under no pressure.

Adam Direen was also unlucky for Beachside when his header came back off the post.

Christian's second goal was magnificent and came from a volley on the turn by captain Tim Wierenga in the 39th minute after Beachside failed to clear a corner.

The heavens opened up in the second half and, together with the strong wind, made conditions difficult for both sides.

Christian had to fight hard but hung on for victory, despite Adam Direen pulling a goal back for Beachside in the 50th minute.

Michaelangelo Depino missed a sitter for Beachside in the 75th minute when he was unmarked at the far post but headed wide from a corner.

Tasmanian will now prepare for a men's and women's clash against Victorian Premier League side Heidelberg at KGV Park on 18 October.

FOOTBALL FEDERATION TASMANIA

By Walter Pless

Photos by Walter Pless

FOSTER ENCOURAGES APPLE ISLE EXPANSION FOR TRULY NATIONAL COMPETITION

Former Socceroo and SBS pundit Craig Foster has expressed encouragement for the potential A-League expansion into Tasmanian territory as the Apple Isle's bid gatherers further positive momentum.

In Hobart last week to help conduct soccer clinics for Tasmanian juniors with former Socceroo captain Paul Wade, Foster spoke positively about a potential team from the Island State.

"I believe one of the advantages of our code in this country which we have to capitalise on, is that soccer is the only truly national football code, which has penetration right down to the very grass roots and all the way up," said Foster.

"So we are arguably the only football code, which must, or should, have a team in every state. That's the reason why I believe Tasmania should have a team."

Wade also spoke admirably of the bid and echoed Foster's sentiment.

"I think it's a great idea - absolutely wonderful idea. To have the length and breath – from Sydney to Perth, and possibly from Townsville to Tasmania – would be fantastic," said Wade, who earned 84 caps for the Socceroos.

The Tasmanian A-League Taskforce is the consortium behind Tasmania's bid, and has been conducting a feasibility study since late 2007 to examine the chances of a successful A-League franchise.

Football Federation Australia requires the Taskforce to tick three boxes – a suitable venue, sustained support base and financial viability – to gain an A-League licence.

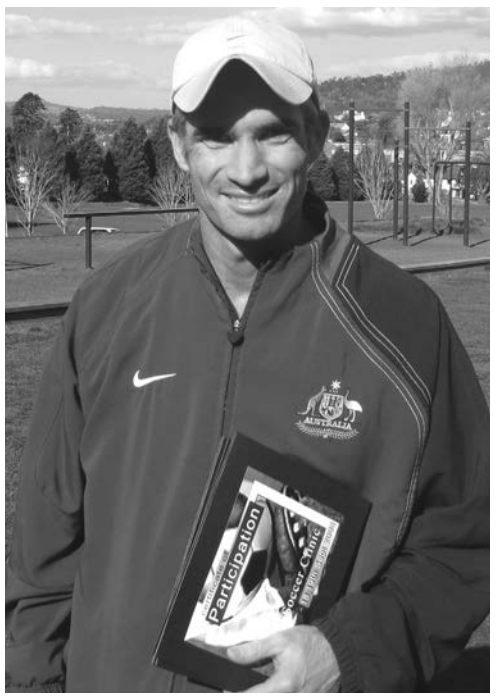
The study has thus far been a roaring success, with two of three criteria – support base and venue suitability – already extensively studied, and the Taskforce has now moved onto the third criterion – talks with a financial backer.

Currently locked in talks to secure crucial cash backing for the proposed team, the Taskforce believe a Tasmanian A-League team could easily achieve the required 10,000 average support base per game, and have two venues – North Hobart Oval and Aurora Stadium – lined up for potential home grounds.

With the population of Tasmanian being significantly smaller than current clubs in the A-League, such as Sydney FC and Melbourne Victory, Foster believes Tasmania should follow the successful model of the Central Coast Mariners who emerged from a similar population base.

"The smaller the population, the better you have to engage per capita, therefore the model to follow would be most similar to the Central Coast Mariners."

"The FFA's Players' Association, recently did a very extensive research into the modelling and market for football, and what the research revealed was you need a minimum population base in the surrounds of 250,000 people to support a regular 10,000 crowd."



Craig Foster in Tassie during the week

With a population just under half a million, a Tasmanian bid could therefore be a realistic success.

With venue and community support covered, Taskforce chairman John McGirr believes that the consortium has made considerable progress in finding the $5-7 million generally needed to grab the FFA's attention for an A-League franchise.

"We are currently in progressive talks with a major sponsor which will provide us with the backing neeed, but for obvious reasons we cannot specify the details as yet," McGirr said.

"At this stage we are planning an official public launch for the bid on October 15th."

Foster stated that the success of Tasmania's bid will be measured in the aftermath of the public launch, and whether or not the government will sufficiently back the side.

"The idea seems to be to go public, get some traction in the media, get awareness, then a surge in following will result. I think gaining government support is seen as vitally important," said Foster.

Although Tasmania faces some tough competition from other consortiums across the nation for an A-League licence, Foster remains positive that a team from the Apple Isle could turn from dream to reality.

"At the moment, I think it is competitive but there is opportunity [for Tasmania] is there. Everyone is keen to grow the league, and therefore it is a very good time for a bid to be put together. I am certainly very supportive of [a Tasmanian team] and I hope it gets going."

By Julius Ross

Photos by Julius Ross

SYDNEY FC

3 - 0

ADELAIDE UNITED

SYDNEY TOO SLICK FOR REDS

ACL Takes Toll On Adelaide

Spectacular goals from Terry McFlynn and Brendon Santalab were the highlights of an otherwise less-than-classic encounter, in which Adelaide United looked tired and maladroit following their Asian exertions.

Adelaide made several changes to the side that had drawn with Kashima Antlers in midweek, while John Kosmina kept faith with the Brosque-Aloisi-Bridge combination in the attacking third, despite the fact that the set-up had creaked somewhat against Newcastle.

The game began with a brilliant goal from Sydney's tireless midfielder McFlynn after only two minutes. A ball forward from Robbie Middleby was gently touched aside by Alex Brosque, and McFlynn, rushing on, sent a blistering right-footed shot into the far corner of Eugene Galekovic's goal.

Sydney FC established a grip on the game, although the next twenty minutes were fairly barren of chances. Adelaide's Alemao miscued a shot when a throw was flicked on to him, and Steve Corica wasted a half-chance at the other end. On 21 minutes Stuart Musialik almost scored a bizarre goal, when his sliding challenge almost rebounded into the Adelaide net, with Galekovic off his line.

On half an hour there was a good chance at each end. Sasa Ognenovski, on a rare upfield excursion, crossed for Kristian Sarkies, whose volley found Clint Bolton on his mettle. The Sydney gloveman promptly released Mark Bridge on the left, whose adroit centre was scuffed badly by Alex Brosque in the box.

Brosque did much better a few minutes later when he extended Sydney's lead. Latching onto an accurate long ball from Tony Popovic, he steered the ball past Ognenovski with his first touch, nudged it past Galekovic with his second and thumped it into the back of the net with his third. The former Queensland man almost made it three on 40 minutes, when he got his head to Shannon Cole's low cross, only to see the ball fly wide of the upright.

Twice in the closing minutes of the half, Cristiano caused problems for the Sydney defence. Three minutes from the interval, confusion between Popovic and Iain Fyfe allowed the Brazilian a clear run at goal, but Bolton narrowed the angle well, and Cristiano's eventual shot came back off the post. A minute later, the Adelaide man again eluded Popovic and set Kristian Sarkies free on the right, and the latter's cross required a desperate clearance from McFlynn.

The second half left much to be desired in terms of entertainment: although Adelaide committed more men forward as the game wore on, they never looked likely to score, and Sydney had clearly stepped down a gear from the first period.

The first genuine chance of the half did not arrive until the 69th minute, when an Adelaide free kick reached Ognenovski in the box, only for Fyfe's fine tackle to thwart the big defender. Fyfe was required again four minutes later, clearing another dangerous right-wing centre from Sarkies.

Brendon Santalab had replaced a somewhat ineffective Mark Bridge on 70 minutes, and his first contribution to the game was a splendid one. Receiving the ball in midfield, thirty-five yards from the Adelaide goal, he took one step forward and sent in a sizzling shot which Galekovic could only get a fingertip to. A marvellous solo goal.

Another Sydney substitute, Dez Giraldi, had a chance nine minutes from the close when Santalab surged through the midfield and found him on the right; the former Adelaide man, however, sliced wildly over the bar. McFlynn, probably Sydney's man of the match, also had a chance to make it four at the close, but his canny run into the box to link up with Brosque's pass was not matched by a shot of similar quality.

Three fairly easy points for Sydney, and Adelaide must be wary of letting their season slip away from them as their fixture crush mounts.

Its stacks on in Sydney as the home side take Adelaide apart

By Mike Salter

Photos by Geoff Jones

PLAYER RATINGS - SFC

Bolton: 7. Commanded his area well.
Cole: 7. Another fine performance from the discovery of the season. His defensive abilities appear to have improved.
Fyfe: 7. Made a couple of important defensive clearances in the second half.
Popovic: 7. Despite an awkward period towards the end of the first half, he was impressively dominant in defence thereafter.
Middleby: 8. His best game of the season so far. Solid and aggressive in defence.
McFlynn: 9. Quite possibly the best game he has ever played for Sydney FC. A superb goal and plenty of good distribution.
Musialik: 6. Still hasn't quite hit the heights that he reached at Newcastle.
Corica: 6. Not quite as incisive as usual.
Brosque: 8. Despite a bad miss in the first half, he always looked the player most likely to cause problems.
Aloisi: 5. So far, he is not looking worth the money.
Bridge: 5. Largely anonymous. Not really suited to the left wing.

Substitutes:
Santalab: 8. Re-energised Sydney's attack when he arrived, and scored one of the goals of the season.
Giraldi: N/A. Not really on long enough to make an impact.
Jurman: N/A. Late substitution for Corica.

Sydney's John Aloisi and Sash Ognenovski flie high for the aerial ball on Saturday night

PLAYER RATINGS - AUFC

Galekovic: 6. Not as sure-footed as against Kashima.
Mullen: 6. No serious errors, but rather short of confidence on his debut.
Valkanis: 6. Policed Aloisi quite well.
Ognenovski: 7: Strong throughout, and surprisingly dangerous when he got forward.
Cassio: 7. One of Adelaide's better performers, solid at the back and offered plenty at the other end..
Salley: 5. A fairly insipid performance.
Reid: 5. A pretty miserable afternoon for the veteran, who failed to make good use of the possession he had.
Sarkies: 6. Good value at national level, continues to be less than commanding for his club.
Alemao: 5. Still doesn't look settled in the A-League.
Cristiano: 8. Did a thankless job at the point of the attack, and was at the heart of most of Adelaide's good moves.
Spagnuolo: 6. Didn't provide the cutting edge out wide that Vidmar had hoped for.

Substitutes:
Jamieson: 6. Attempted to add some bite to the midfield. Did not succeed particularly.
Younis: 4. Looks intimidated by the A-League. A serious disappointment thus far this season.
Cornthwaite: N/A. Wasn't given sufficient time to score another embarrassing own goal.

PERTH GLORY

1 - 0

WELLINGTON PHOENIX

GLORY FINALLY BREAKS ITS DROUGHT

First Win In Nine Months And Off The Bottom

Perth Glory recorded its first win of the A-League season with a 1-0 victory over Wellington Phoenix at Members Equity Stadium.

Former Ivory Coast international Eugene Dadi starred for Glory, earning a penalty and then calmly converting it twelve minutes from time to give Perth its first win in over nine months.

With Socceroos coach Pim Verbeek keeping a close eye on him in the stands; it was Nikita Rukavytsya who had the first real chance of the match in the 10th minute when the ball fell to the Beijing Olympian on the edge of the box, only for him to waste the chance by shooting too quickly and sending it well over.

With the hosts totally in control of the game it seemed only a matter of time until they took the lead. That almost occurred in the 27th minute when Glen Moss was adjudged to have handled a backpass from Richard Johnson. That handed Perth a free-kick on six yards but new signing Wayne Srhoj shot straight into the wall.

Wellington's best chance of the half came seven minutes later when Troy Hearfield was on the end of a beautiful cross but totally miscued his shot while totally open on 15 yards.

Just before half time Glory were unlucky not to take the lead when midfielder James Robinson did brilliantly to keep in a wayward free-kick from Scott Bulloch, with Robinson heading towards Nikolai Topor-Stanley, only for the full-back to have his firm header cleared off the line by Jon McKain.

Going into the match Perth hadn't kept a clean sheet in its past 18 A-League matches and they almost set a new league record for matches without keeping the opponent scoreless when Wellington's Andrew Durante made a strong run towards the Glory penalty box and playing through Shane Smeltz, only for the striker to blaze over from 15 yards in the 50th minute.

Dadi had an excellent chance to put Glory ahead 19 minutes later when Adriano Pellegrino crossed into his path, only for the former Aberdeen striker to have his shot from six yards brilliantly saved by Moss.

Three minutes later the visitors were saved again by Moss after substitute Naum Sekulovski unleashed a fierce shot from 25 yards, forcing the Phoenix 'keeper to tip over at full stretch.

Thirteen minutes before full-time Dadi earned the penalty that would win the game for Glory after McKain miscued a clearance straight into the import's path, and then proceeded to rugby tackle him to give away a blatant penalty. Dadi finished superbly, sending Moss the wrong way and putting Perth on the verge of its long awaited first victory of the new campaign.

A lackluster Wellington were unable to produce any serious chances in the final minutes, with Perth able to hold on for a 1-0 victory, relegating Phoenix to the bottom of the table and giving a sense of hope to the crowd of 4,433, the lowest in Glory history.

By Jacob Kagi

In Perth

PLAYER RATINGS - ROAR

Petkovic: 5 – Didn't have to make a single save.
Coyne: 6 – Largely unchallenged at full-back.
Tarka: 7 – Looked strong and commanded Perth's defence well.
Harnwell: 6 – Shaky early but finished the game well.
Topor-Stanley: 6 – Looked disinterested at times but made decent contributions.
Pellegrino: 6 – Worked hard and looked lively, only for his crossing to let him down.
Robinson: 7 – Made some excellent passes and worked exceptionally hard.
Srhoj: 7 – Had an outstanding A-League debut. Should forge a nice midfield partnership with Amaral once the Brazilian returns from injury.
Bulloch: 6 – Similarly to Pellegrino was let down by his crossing.
Rukavytsya: 5 – Another disappointing performance from the out of form striker.
Dadi: 8 – Clearly Perth's best player. Consistently looked dangerous and **worked incredibly hard.**
Sekulovski: 7 – Had a large impact after coming on as substitute.
Trinidad: 7 – Should press for a recall to the starting line-up after a strong performance in the final minutes.

PLAYER RATINGS - GLORY

Moss: 8 – Continually saved the Phoenix with several excellent saves.
Mulligan: 5 – Offered nothing going forward and had trouble containing Bulloch and Sekulovski down the left.
McKain: 4 – Should take all of the blame for the penalty and eventual goal.
Durante: 6 – Did reasonably well defensively and made a few positive forward runs.
Lochead: 6 – Found the battle with Pellegrino tough at times but didn't do too badly.
Gao: 5 – Unable to provide Wellington with the wide threat they desperately needed.
Ferrante: 6 – Worked hard and had a solid game.
Johnson: 6 – Drifted in and out of the game but had some impact.
Daniel: 5 – Similarly to Gao failed to offer anything out wide.
Hearfield: 6 – Worked tirelessly but wasted a few good chances.
Smeltz: 5 – Had little involvement and appeared to slack off at times.
Kwasnik: 5 – Had very little impact after coming on with 20 minutes to go.
Brown and Sigmund: Not on long enough to make an impact.

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QUEENSLAND ROAR

0 - 1

NEWCASTLE JETS

JETS TAKE OFF AFTER DELAYS

Roar KO'D As Griffiths Lands Late Punch

Queensland fans left Suncorp Stadium disappointed on Friday night after seeing their side dominate for much of the game, only to go down to a late goal from Joel Griffiths.

The defeat stretched Newcastle's undefeated run in Queensland to five matches and gave them their first three points of the season in what has been a slow start to the side's A-League title defence.

The match began with talk from the Queensland camp centring on their desire to gain revenge for their exit at the hands of Newcastle in last season's preliminary final. This was not the only talking point as midfielder Charlie Miller would become the first player to score in five consecutive A-League matches if he was able to add to his tally during proceedings.

The first chance of the game though fell to Queensland's Matthew McKay on 16 minutes who pounced on a soft back-pass from defender Daniel Piorkowski. McKay recovered the ball inside the area before attempting to place it underneath the advancing Covic but the 'keeper made a good save with his legs.

Covic thwarted Queensland once again only five minutes later after saving superbly from a close range header from Sergio Van Dijk. Massimo Murdocca had sent in a darting cross from the right flank to the Dutchman only for him to see his bottom right corner effort denied by a reaction save from the Jets 'keeper who seemingly reached behind his own body to get to the ball.

Newcastle were struggling to create anything going forward with Tarek Elrich putting well wide of Liam Reddy's left-hand post in what was their best chance of the first half hour.

Van Dijk again found himself in a good position in the 34th minute after good work from Matthew McKay on the right flank. McKay's cross found Van Dijk unmarked at the back-post but the striker blasted his shot over the bar from a tight angle.

The run of play continued on commencement of the second half with Charlie Miller sending a diving header straight into the arms of Ante Covic after another cross from McKay.

The 53rd minute saw Jets youngster James Holland dispossess full-back Andrew Packer on the edge of the area before squaring the ball to Song, unmarked at the back-post before putting his shot too close to Reddy who palmed the ball away.

The introduction of Tahj Minniecon and Michael Zullo in the 67th minute served to immediately liven up a match that was becoming short on genuine excitement. Zullo forced Covic into action after recovering a loose ball on the edge of Newcastle's area but didn't generate enough power to truly test the keeper.

Minniecon made two driving runs in quick succession into the Newcastle area before going to ground, but speculative appeals for penalties were waved away on both occasions by match referee Craig Zetter.

Charlie Miller saw another chance pass in the 79th minute after meeting an angled pass from Massimo Murdocca in the penalty area. The Scotsman attempted a first-time shot, but didn't generate enough power to trouble the excellent Covic who saved comfortably.

Sergio van Dyke uses his power in the air to worry the Jets defence, als for the home side the champs showed their resiliance and took the points with a late goal frm Joel Griffiths

Queensland's lack of cutting edge left the stage set for Newcastle's Joel Griffiths who capitalised on 'keeper Liam Reddy's failed attempt to punch clear a Song corner in the 83rd minute. The Newcastle striker poked the ball into the bottom right-hand corner to take his personal tally against the Queensland side to six in eight games and give the Jets a fortunate victory.

Newcastle coach Gary Van Egmond responded to suggestions the result was undeserved "A draw was more the right result. It was a real arm-wrestle," he said. "But confidence and belief is starting to build within the team and at the moment if we have to grind out a win we will"

Both coaches took something out of the game with Queensland's Frank Farina disappointed with the result but taking encouragement from other areas.

"If we were playing poorly I'd be upset. Things will turn, I'm pleased with the effort, creativity and work rate we've shown tonight," he said.

By Jarrod Ellis in Brisbane

Photos by Lee McCormick

PLAYER RATINGS - ROAR

1. Liam Reddy – 6 – Rarely tested before his late mistake
2. Andrew Packer – 5 – Quiet throughout the match
3. Luke DeVere – 6 – A solid performance at the back
4. Craig Moore – 7 – An assured display, dealt with Griffiths well
8. Massimo Murdocca - 6 – A lively performance in midfield
9. Sergio Van Dijk – 6 – Had chances but was absent for large portions of the match
10. Charlie Miller – 8 – Was the source of much of Queensland's attacking verve
11. Reinaldo – 5 – Started well but faded as the match progressed
15. Matt McKay – 7 – Produced some good work down the right
16. Hyuk-Su Seo – 7 – Rarely went forward but shut down Song well
12. Tahj Minniecon 67' – 6 – Provided a threat with his forward runs
7. Michael Zullo 67' – 6 – Constantly looking for something wide left
6. David Dodd 88' – 5 - Didn't influence the match during his time on the field

PLAYER RATINGS - JETS

1. Ante Covic – 8 – Best player on the pitch for Newcastle
25. David Pirkowski – 6 – Recovered well from his early mistake
3. Jade North – 6 – Dealt well with Queensland's strikers
2. Adam Griffiths – 6 – Was comfortable on the ball
5. James Holland – 6 – Played well in the centre of the park
8. Matt Thompson – 5 – Struggled to assert influence
10. Jin-Hyung Song – 6 – Active down the left hand side but with little result
11. Tarek Elrich – 6 – Made himself available on the right
13. Adam D'Apuzzo – 6 – A solid defensive performance
15. Jason Hoffman – 5 – Anonymous for portions of the match
9. Joel Griffiths – 6 – Quiet aside from his goal
7. Kaz Patafta 64' – 5 – Failed to create much from midfield
23. Edmundo Zura 69' – 6 – Troubled the QLD defence as the match pro-

CENTRAL COAST MARINERS

2 - 2

MELBOURNE VICTORY

ARCHIE TO THE RESCUE

Victory Fight With 10 Men Again

Archie Thompson has snatched a dramatic late 2-2 draw for a 10-man Melbourne Victory side against Central Coast in Gosford, scoring in the 94th minute to give Victory a deserved point

Victory had a man sent off for the second week in a row, with keeper Michael Theoklitos given his marching orders just before the hour for an off the ball incident involving Sasho Petrovski. At that point, Melbourne had a strong foothold on the game with the scores 1-1 after goals firstly from Matt Simon and then from Thompson.

But Theoklitos' departure allowed the Mariners to assume control and despite some fine work between the posts from understudy Mitch Langerak, the home side eventually got in front again through Simon on 83 minutes.

However, in a wonderful display of character, Melbourne never gave up and Grant Brebner won the ball in the box with just seconds left, fed it across to Thompson, who beat Mark Bosnich with an excellent left foot finish.

The draw means Melbourne maintains its hold on top spot of the ladder ahead of next week's home fixture against Queensland at Telstra Dome.

The Mariners opened the scoring on 12 minutes. With space opening up down the right, Brad Porter was able to deliver a cross into the box. Simon outpointed Michael Thwaite then had the poise to slip his strike under Theoklitos.

Melbourne's response was quick when Hernandez was put through by Rody Vargas on the right. The Costa Rican turned his opponent, rolled it to Thompson, who brilliantly beat his man and then finished well to secure his fourth goal at Bluetongue.

The Mariners were creating more chances early in the game and should have been 2-1 up on 20 minutes. Adrian Caceres put through John Hutchison, but Theoklitos moved quickly to block the close-range shot.

Theoklitos was kept busy cutting off the Mariners' advances and his quick thinking snuffed out a chance from Sasho Petrovski. Danny Allsopp could have put his team up at the half after profiting from some good work from Thompson and Billy Celeski, however Bosnich closed down the angle and produced a block to thwart the Melbourne striker.

Tom Pondeljak replaced Evan Berger at half time while Allsopp was again denied by Bosnich one-on-one in the opening two minutes of the half. It was a sign of Victory's attacking intent and shortly after Hernandez's shot was blocked by a desperate lunge from Pedj Bojic and Thompson mis-hit a good chance from Thwaite's cross

However, the match turned just before the hour when Theoklitos and Petrovski had a verbal confrontation and the keeper's physical reaction was deemed inappropriate by Peter Green and he was handed a straight red card.

Langerak came on, replacing Hernandez and the young custodian had an immediate impact, denying Caceres' well-hit shot. Petrovski then gave the 20-year-old a real scare when he just shot wide.

The Mariners weren't helping their own cause with Caceres' on target effort deflected wide by Petrovski on 75 minutes. The veteran striker was replaced by Dylan Macallister soon after, while Allsopp exited for Brebner.

Langerak denied Caceres once more, while two subsequent shots were deflected by Melbourne defenders to keep Victory in the game. But the weight of attacking pressure told and on 83 minutes, a long cross allowed Simon to rise highest and head the ball into the bar and then across the line.

But, as has happened so often in clashes between these two sides, there was a twist in the tail, with Thompson scoring in the final minute of stoppage time.

By Ben Montgomery

Courtesy MVFC

A-LEAGUE SCOREBOARD

Queensland Roar 0
Newcastle Jets 1 (Joel Griffiths 82')
Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane
Friday 19 September 2008
Referee: Craig Zetter
Crowd: 12,103

Queensland Roar line-up: 1.Liam REDDY (gk), 2.Andrew PACKER, 3.Luke DEVERE, 4.Craig MOORE (Captain), 8.Massimo MURDOCCA, 9.Sergio VAN DIJK, 10.Charlie MILLER (6.Dave DODD 89'), 11.Reinaldo (7.Michael ZULLO 68'), 15.Matt McKAY, 16.Hyuk-Su SEO, 18.Danny TIATTO (12.Tahj MINNIECON 68').

Substitutes Not Used: 20.Griffin McMASTER (gk).

Yellow Cards: Matt McKay 60', Michael Zullo 91+'.

Red Cards: Nil

Newcastle Jets line-up: 1.Ante COVIC (gk), 2.Adam GRIFFITHS, 3.Jade NORTH (Captain), 5.James HOLLAND, 8.Matt THOMPSON (23.Edmundo ZURA 70'), 9.Joel GRIFFITHS, 10.Jin-Hyung SONG, 11.Tarek ELRICH, 13.Adam D'APUZZO, 15.Jason HOFFMAN (7.Kaz PATAFTA 64'), 25.Daniel PIORKOWSKI.

Substitutes Not Used: 12.Jobe WHEELHOUSE, 20.Ben KENNEDY (gk).

Yellow Cards: Jin Hyung Song 4', Tarek Elrich 60'
Red Cards: Nil

Sydney FC 3 (Terry McFlynn 2', Alex Brosque 34', Brendon Santalab 79')
Adelaide United 0
Sydney Football Stadium, Sydney
Saturday 20 September 2008
Referee: Ben Williams
Crowd: 12,462

Sydney FC line-up: 1.Clint BOLTON (gk), 2.Iain FYFE, 6.Tony POPOVIC (Captain), 7.Rob MIDDLEBY, 8.Stuart MUSIALIK, 10.Steve CORICA (27.Matthew JURMAN 89'), 12.Shannon COLE, 14.Alex BROSQUE, 15.Terry MCFLYNN, 19.Mark BRIDGE (11.Brendon SANTALAB 70'), 23.John ALOISI (25.Dez GIRALDI 77')

Substitutes not used: 20.Ivan NECESVSKI (gk).

Yellow Cards: nil

Red Cards: nil

Adelaide United line-Up: 20.Eugene GALEKOVIC (gk), 3.ALEMAO, 5.Michael VALKANIS (Captain), 6.CASSIO, 8.Kristian SARKIES,10.CRISTIANO, 15.Jonas SALLEY (25.Robert YOUNIS 59'), 16.Daniel MULLEN, 19.Sasa OGNENOVSKI (2.Robert CORNTHWAITE 83'), 21.Jason SPAGNUOLO (14.Scott JAMIESON 54'), 24.Paul REID.

Substitutes not used: Mark BIRIGHITTI (gk).

Yellow Cards: Paul Reid 20', Sasa Ognenovski 62'
Red Cards: nil

Central Coast Mariners 2 (Matt Simon 11'/82')
Melbourne Victory 2 (Archie Thompson 15'/94+')
Bluetongue Stadium, Gosford
Referee: Peter Green
Crowd: 9,010

Central Coast Mariners line-up: 40.Mark BOSNICH (gk), 4.Pedj BOJIC, 5.Bradley PORTER, 7.John HUTCHINSON, 10.Adrian CACERES (6.David D'APUZZO 89'), 16.Nigel BOOGAARD, 17.Matthew OSMAN, 18.Alex WILKINSON (Captain), 19.Matt SIMON, 22.Sasho PETROVSKI (11.Dylan MACALLISTER 77'), 23.Mile JEDINAK.

Substitutes Not Used: 13.Paul O'GRADY, 30.Andrew REDMAYNE (gk)

Yellow Cards: Nil
Red Cards: Nil

Melbourne Victory line-up: 1.Michael THEOKLITOS (gk), 2.Kevin MUSCAT (Captain), 3.Michael THWAITE, 7.Matthew KEMP, 9.Danny ALLSOPP (8.Grant BREBNER 79'), 10.Archie THOMPSON, 12.Rodrigo VARGAS, 14.Billy CELESKI, 16.Carlos HERNANDEZ (20.Mitchell LANGERAK (gk) 53'), 17.Jose Luis LOPEZ, 19.Evan BERGER (15.Tom PONDELJAK 46').

Substitutes Not Used: 5.Sebastian RYALL.

Yellow Cards: Matthew Kemp 71'.
Red Cards: Michael Theoklitos 53'.

Perth Glory 1 (Eugene Dadi 78'(pen))
Wellington Phoenix 0
Members Equity Stadium, Perth
Sunday 21 September 2008
Referee: Strebre Delovski
Crowd: 4,433

Perth Glory line-up: 1.Jason PETKOVIC (gk), 2.Nikolai TOPOR-STANLEY, 3.David TARKA, 4.Jamie COYNE (Captain), 5.Jamie HARNWELL, 8.James ROBINSON, 11.Scott BULLOCH, 13.Nikita RUKAVYTSYA (9.Adrian TRINIDAD 73'), 14.Eugene DADI, 16.Adriano PELLEGRINO, 22.Wayne SRHOJ (19.Naum SEKULOVSKI 64').

Substitutes Not Used: 27.Stuart McLAREN, 30.Tando VELAPHI (gk).

Yellow Cards: Jamie Harnwell 14', Nikolai Topor-Stanley 63'.
Red Cards: Nil

Wellington Phoenix line-up: 20.Glen MOSS (gk), 3.Tony LOCHHEAD, 4.Jon McKAIN, 9.Shane SMELTZ, 10.Michael FERRANTE, 11.DANIEL, 12.Richard JOHNSON (6.Tim BROWN 85'),

STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Melbourne Victory	5	3	2	0	12	4	8	11
2 Sydney FC	5	3	2	0	11	4	7	11
3 Adelaide United	5	2	1	2	5	5	0	7
4 Central Coast Mariners	5	1	3	1	9	8	1	6
5 Newcastle Jets	5	1	3	1	5	9	-4	6
6 Queensland Roar	5	1	2	2	7	7	0	5
7 Perth Glory	5	1	1	3	6	12	-6	4
8 Wellington Phoenix	5	0	2	3	3	7	-6	2

NEXT ROUND

CENTRAL COAST MARINERS
V
PERTH GLORY
KO 8pm Friday 26th Sep
Bluetongue Stadium

ADELAIDE UNITED
V
NEWCASTLE JETS
KO 6.30pm Saturday 27th Sep
Hindmarsh Stadium

WELLINGTON PHOENIX
V
SYDNEY FC
KO 5pm Sunday 28th Sep[
Westpac Stadium

MELBOURNE VICTORY
V
QUEENSLAND ROAR
KO 5pm Sunday 28th August
Telstra Dome

TOP SCORERS

4 – Danny Allsopp (MV), Eugene Dadi (PG), Charlie Miller (QR), Matt Simon (CCM).
3 – Steve Corica (SFC), Joel Griffiths (NJ), Shane Smeltz (WP)

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Cindy Dussoye
Ashburton WFC 18 votes

Belinda Pannella
Heidelberg United WFC 17 votes

Katrina Smith
Eltham North WfC 17 votes